MARVEL COMICS
ELEKTRA
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ELEKTRA MEGAZINE
RE-PRESENTING
THE ELEKTRA SAGA
PART ONE OF TWO
DIRECT EDITION
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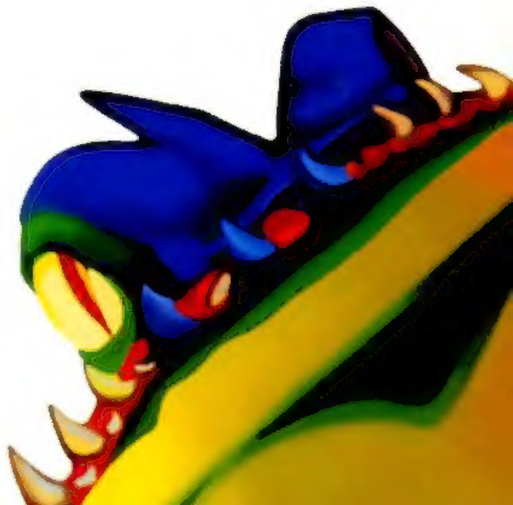

STAN LEE PRESENTS

ELEKTRA

THE ELEKTRA SAGA

- PART I -

by
FRANK MILLER
with
KLAUS JANSON

Editor
DENNY O'NEIL

Reprint Editor
JOE ANDREANI

Original Reprint Editor
RALPH MACCHIO

Editor In Chief
BOB HARRAS

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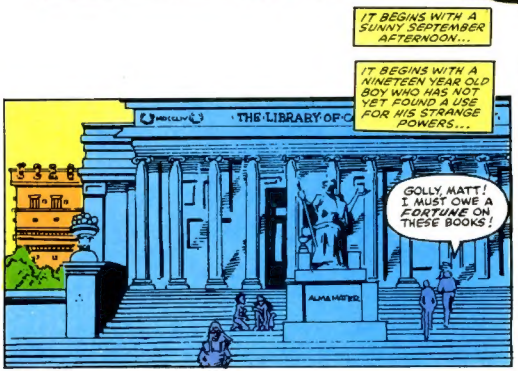

IT BEGINS WITH A SUNNY SEPTEMBER AFTERNOON...
IT BEGINS WITH A NINETEEN YEAR OLD BOY WHO HAS NOT YET FOUND A USE FOR HIS STRANGE POWERS...
THE LIBRARY OF
ALMA MATER
GOLLY, MATT! I MUST OWE A FORTUNE ON THESE BOOKS!

CAREFUL, BUDDY! STATUE AT TWELVE O'CLOCK!
FOGGY, I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE-- YOU DON'T HAVE TO POINT OUT OBSTACLES TO ME.
SURE, PAL--

--I JUST WANNA MAKE SURE NOTHING HAPPENS TO MY NEW ROOMIE, NOT TO MENTION THE SMARTEST--
OOF!
FOGGY!

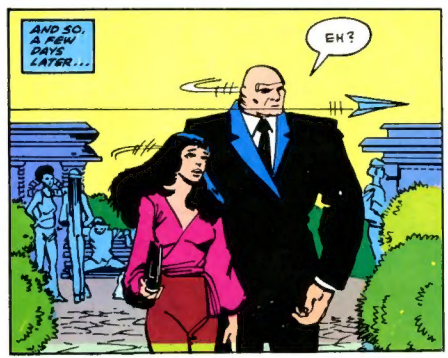
FOGGY? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
NOT TO WORRY, REO! I ALWAYS LAND BUTTER SIDE UP!
FRANKLIN NELSON, MATTHEW MURDOCK-- WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?

UM, Y'SEE, SIR...
I SEE, NELSON, THAT YOU ARE BLOCKING THE WAY. I SEE THAT I AM ESCORTING A NEW STUDENT-- AN IMPORTANT NEW STUDENT-- AROUND THE CAMPUS.
I SEE THAT THIS SORT OF NONSENSE...
MATT DOES NOT SEE, BUT HE SMELLS A DELICATE FRENCH PERFUME...

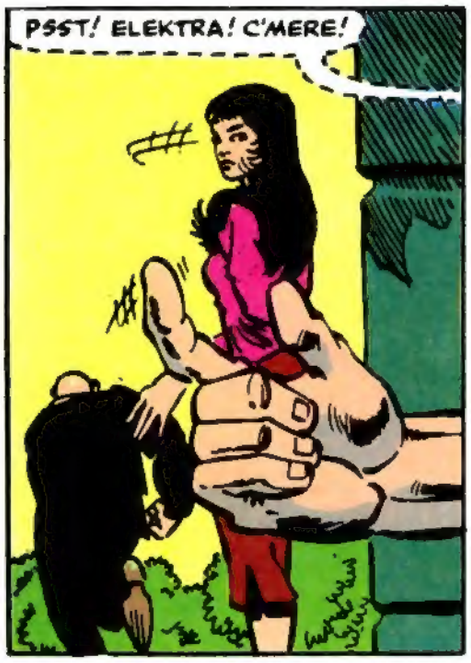
...AND HEARS A VOICE, SOFT AS VELVET.
YOU REALLY SHOULD TAKE BETTER CARE OF YOUR FRIEND.

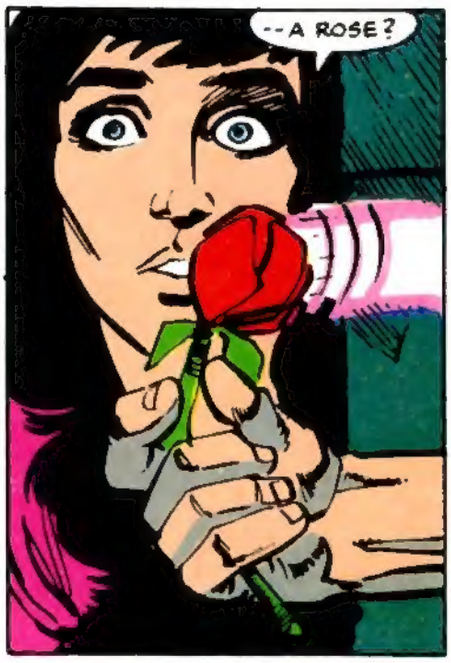
MISS, I-- UFF!
BACK! YOU WILL NOT TOUCH HER!
ATHOS-- DON'T--
COME AWAY, ELEKTRA.
BUT I... VERY WELL, POPPA.

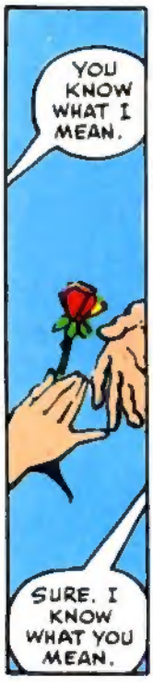
ELEKTRA!...
BOY, MATT, I THOUGHT SURE THE DEAN WAS GONNA TEAR MY HEAD OFF!
MATT, YOU OKAY?
MATT?

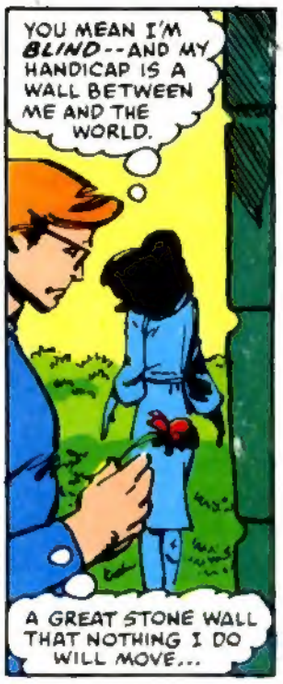

AND SO, A FEW DAYS LATER...
EH?

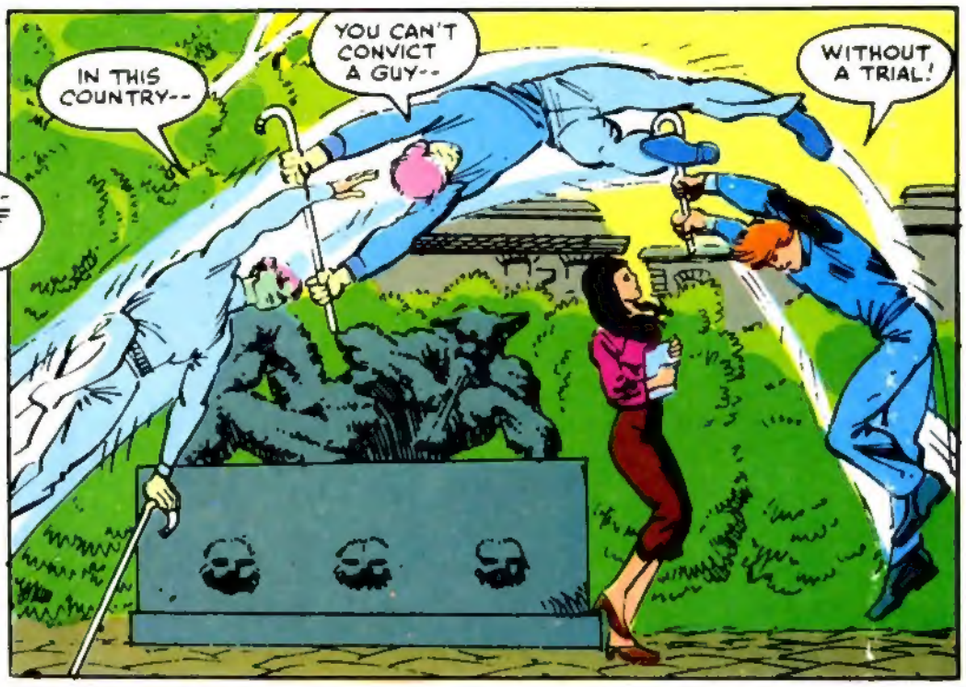
HEY-- BULLET-HEAD!
WHO DARES?
STAY HERE, LITTLE ONE. I WILL ATTEND TO THIS!











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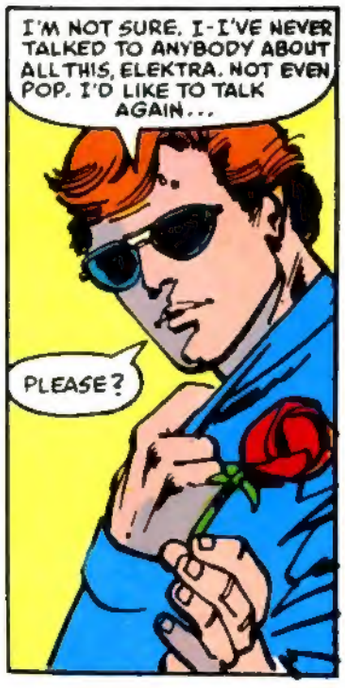
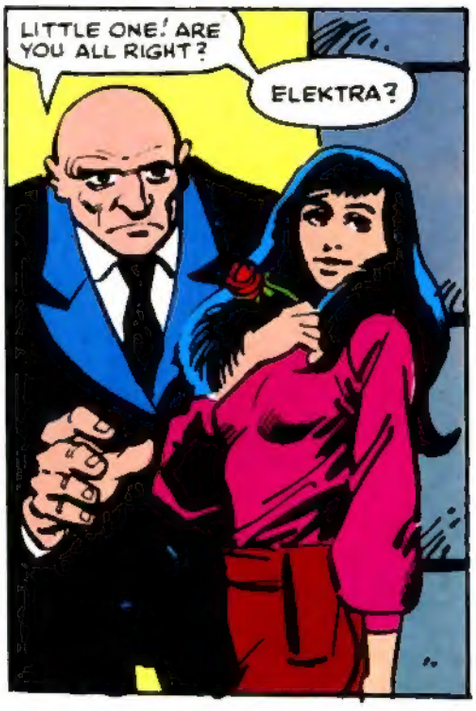
HOW... HOW DID YOU DO THAT, MATT? I MEAN, YOU--
I'M BLIND, BUT I HAVE OTHER ABILITIES THAT MORE THAN COMPENSATE.
I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.
I WAS FIFTEEN WHEN I SAVED AN OLD MAN'S LIFE BY SHOVING HIM OUT OF THE WAY OF A RUNAWAY TRUCK.
I'M NOT SURE I DO, EITHER.

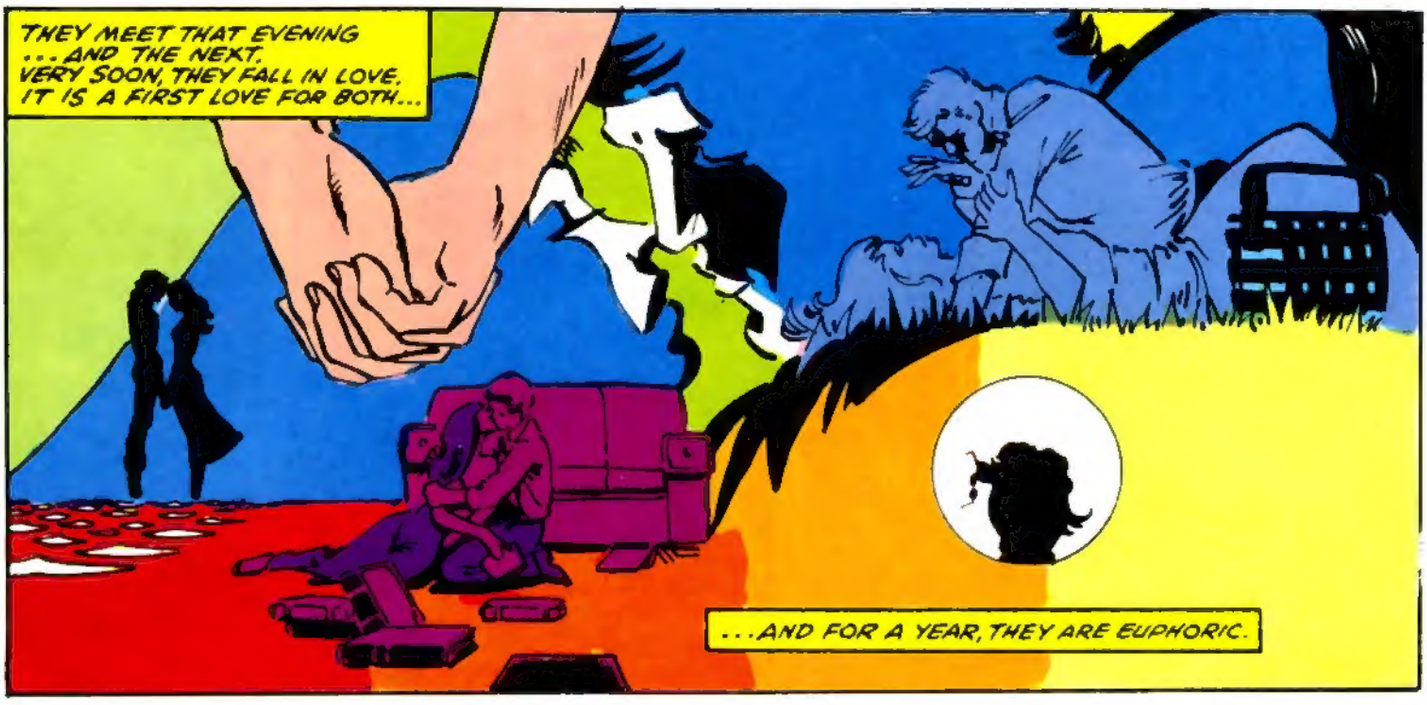
A RADIOACTIVE CANNISTER FROM THE TRUCK STRUCK ME ACROSS THE EYES, BLINDING ME.
HOW HORRIBLE!
YES. IT WAS. BUT I LATER FOUND MY REMAINING SENSES INCREDIBLY HEIGHTENED.
I CAN HEAR THE FAINTEST WHISPER-- EVEN A HEARTBEAT. I CAN SMELL A ROSE FROM A HUNDRED FEET AWAY.
I'VE EVEN GOT A KIND OF 'RADAR,' WHICH LETS ME FEEL OBJECTS AROUND ME. IT'S NOT LIKE SIGHT-- IT'S LIKE TOUCHING EVERYTHING AT ONCE!
FANTASTIC! WHY KEEP IT A SECRET?

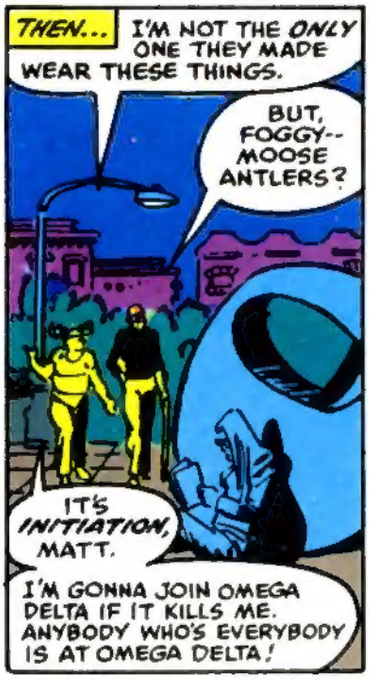

I'M NOT SURE. I-I'VE NEVER TALKED TO ANYBODY ABOUT ALL THIS, ELEKTRA. NOT EVEN POP. I'D LIKE TO TALK AGAIN...
PLEASE?

COME FOR ME AT EIGHT...
...'FOUR EYES!

FAT LITTLE PIG CALLS ME 'BULLET HEAD'...
UH-OH! THERE'S ATHOS! I'D BETTER GO!
BYE!


LITTLE ONE! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
ELEKTRA?


THEY MEET THAT EVENING ...AND THE NEXT. VERY SOON, THEY FALL IN LOVE. IT IS A FIRST LOVE FOR BOTH...
...AND FOR A YEAR, THEY ARE EUPHORIC.


THEN...
I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE THEY MADE WEAR THESE THINGS.
BUT, FOGGY-- MOOSE ANTLERS?
IT'S INITIATION, MATT.
I'M GONNA JOIN OMEGA DELTA IF IT KILLS ME. ANYBODY WHO'S EVERYBODY IS AT OMEGA DELTA!

GOSH, I'M HUNGRY AS A BEAR. WHAT SAY WE...
I CAN'T, FOGGY.
TODAY'S ELEKTRA'S BIRTHDAY, AND WE'RE GOING TO...
WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

WHAT NO! -- OH, GOLLY! LOOK AT ALL THOSE COPS. WONDER WHAT'S GOING ON?
SOMETHING IS VERY WRONG HERE.
YOU COULD CUT THE TENSION IN THE AIR.

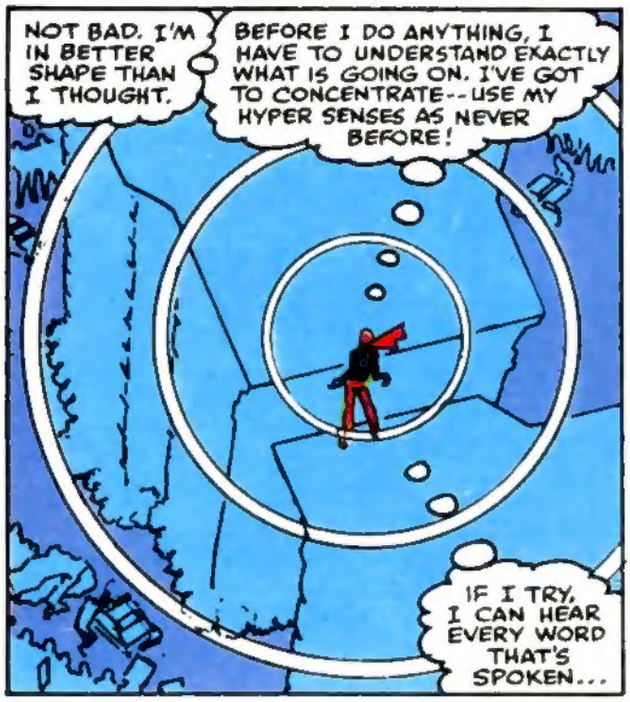
LIKE, THERE'S THIS RILLY INTENSE SCENE IN THERE, Y'KNOW? THERE'S THESE GUYS HOLDING HOSTAGES, LIKE IN THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING. INTENSE. RILLY INTENSE.
HEY-- I LIKE THE ANTLERS.
THANKS!

HOLD ON A SECOND... THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING? ISN'T THAT WHERE YOU'RE MEETING ELEKTRA, MATT?

MATT?
HE'S GONE!

IN THE SHADOW OF A NEARBY BUILDING...
I MEANT TO GIVE THIS SCARF TO ELEKTRA AS A BIRTHDAY GIFT.
BUT NOW IT'S MY ONLY MEANS OF DISGUISE.

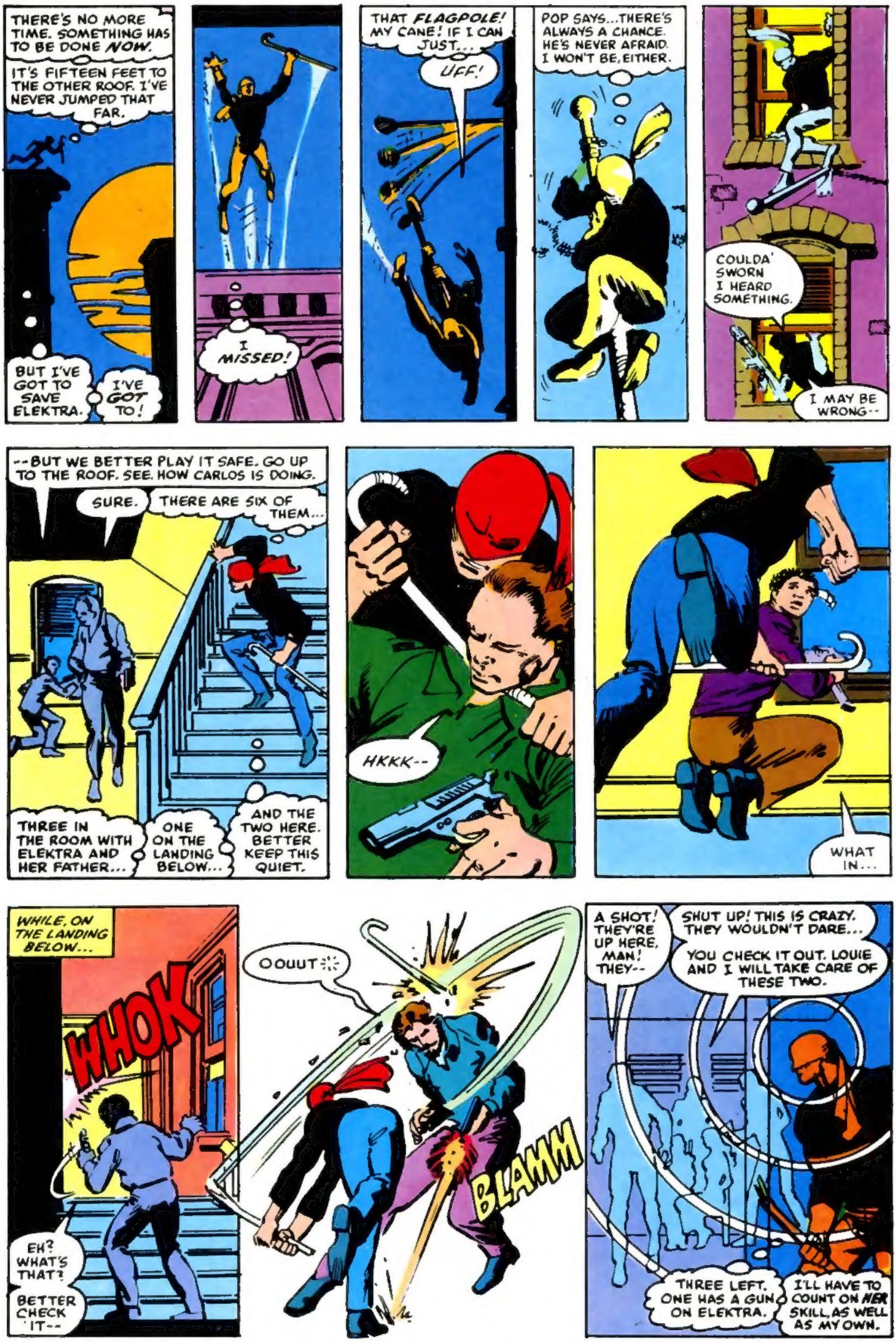
HAVE TO GAIN ALTITUDE-- SCAN THE SITUATION.
NOW I'LL SEE IF ALL THOSE HOURS OF SECRET TRAINING COUNT FOR ANYTHING!


NOT BAD. I'M IN BETTER SHAPE THAN I THOUGHT.
BEFORE I DO ANYTHING, I HAVE TO UNDERSTAND EXACTLY WHAT IS GOING ON. I'VE GOT TO CONCENTRATE-- USE MY HYPER SENSES AS NEVER BEFORE!
IF I TRY, I CAN HEAR EVERY WORD THAT'S SPOKEN...

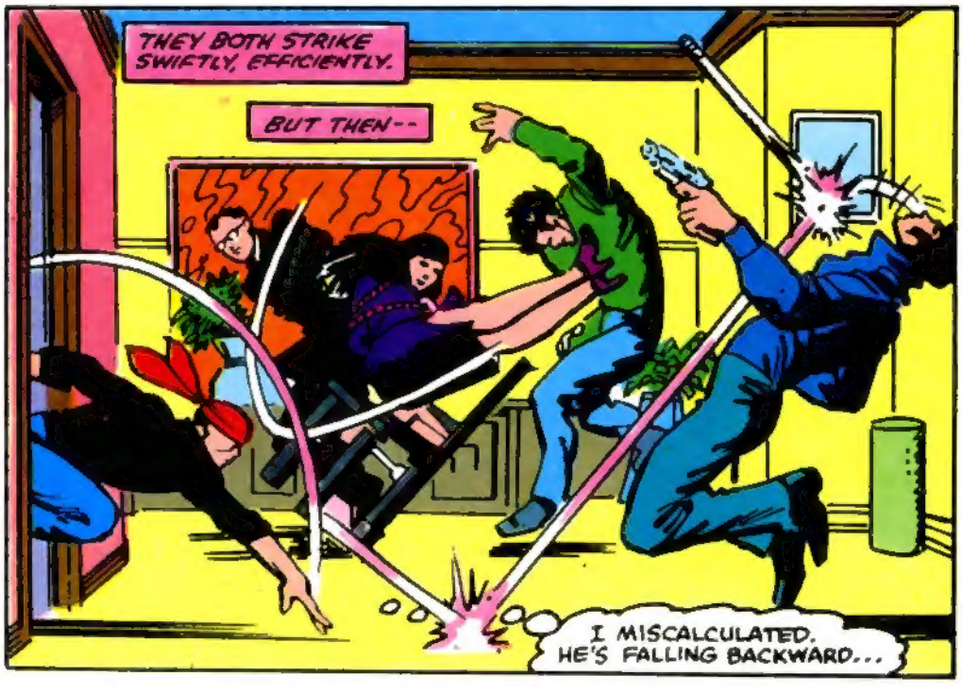
YOU ARE SURROUNDED. IT'S HOPELESS, PLEASE... RELEASE THE AMBASSADOR AND HIS DAUGHTER...
JUST LET ONE OF THOSE WORMS SHOW HIMSELF... JUST FOR A SECOND...

GET BENT, PIG!
WE WANT A CAR-- AND A PLANE OUTTA TOWN!
CRIPES, THERE MUST BE A THOUSAND COPS OUT THERE! WE'VE HAD IT, MAN!

"SHUT UP. JUST SHUT UP. LET ME THINK... YEAH... WE SNUFF THE CUTIE. THAT'LL SHOW 'EM WE MEAN BUSINESS!"
"MAN, WE CAN'T DO THAT! THEY'LL--"
"SHUT UP. IF I SAY WE KILL HER, WE KILL HER!"


THERE'S NO MORE TIME. SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE NOW.
IT'S FIFTEEN FEET TO THE OTHER ROOF. I'VE NEVER JUMPED THAT FAR.
BUT I'VE GOT TO SAVE ELEKTRA.
I'VE GOT TO!
I MISSED!
THAT FLAGPOLE! MY CANE! IF I CAN JUST...
UFF!
POP SAYS...THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE. HE'S NEVER AFRAID. I WON'T BE, EITHER.
COULDA' SWORN I HEARD SOMETHING.
I MAY BE WRONG--
--BUT WE BETTER PLAY IT SAFE. GO UP TO THE ROOF. SEE HOW CARLOS IS DOING.
SURE.
THERE ARE SIX OF THEM...
THREE IN THE ROOM WITH ELEKTRA AND HER FATHER...
ONE ON THE LANDING BELOW...
AND THE TWO HERE. BETTER KEEP THIS QUIET.
HKKK--
WHAT IN...
WHILE, ON THE LANDING BELOW...
WHOK
EH? WHAT'S THAT?
BETTER CHECK IT--
OOUUT
BLAMM
A SHOT! THEY'RE UP HERE, MAN! THEY--
SHUT UP! THIS IS CRAZY. THEY WOULDN'T DARE...
YOU CHECK IT OUT. LOUIE AND I WILL TAKE CARE OF THESE TWO.
THREE LEFT. ONE HAS A GUN ON ELEKTRA.
I'LL HAVE TO COUNT ON HER SKILL, AS WELL AS MY OWN.

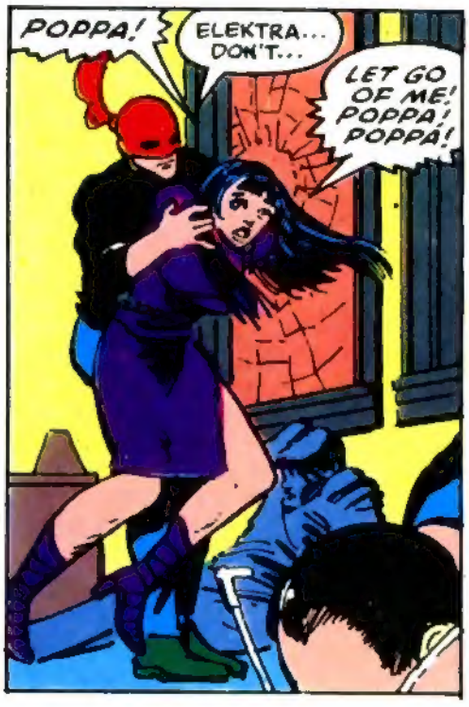
THOK
HIT 'EM LOW, OLIVE OIL!


THEY BOTH STRIKE SWIFTLY, EFFICIENTLY.
BUT THEN--
I MISCALCULATED. HE'S FALLING BACKWARD...

...AND THROUGH THE WINDOW!
THEY'RE KILLING THE HOSTAGES!
THOSE SLIMY... ALL I NEED IS A CLEAR SHOT, THAT'S ALL...

"...JUST A CLEAR SHOT AT ONE OF THEM, JUST FOR A SECOND...
"WAIT... WHAT'S THAT? I CAN SEE SOMETHING..."
OH, NO...
STAY DOWN, SIR!
STAY DOWN!
BUT I...

URRGH!
FUP
FUP
FUP


POPPA!
ELEKTRA... DON'T...
LET GO OF ME! POPPA! POPPA!

IT'S TOO LATE. HIS HEART... IT'S STOPPED.
ELEKTRA, I'M SORRY

NO... POPPA...
SHE DOESN'T CRY. NOT THEN.

NOT LATER.

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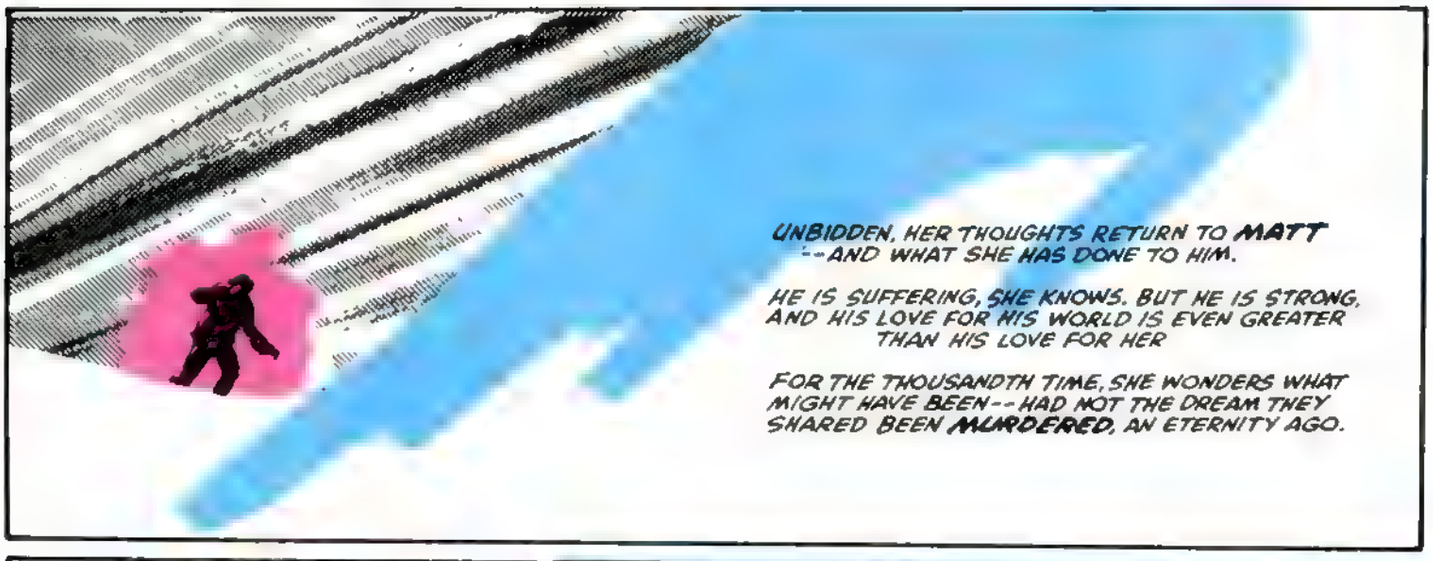
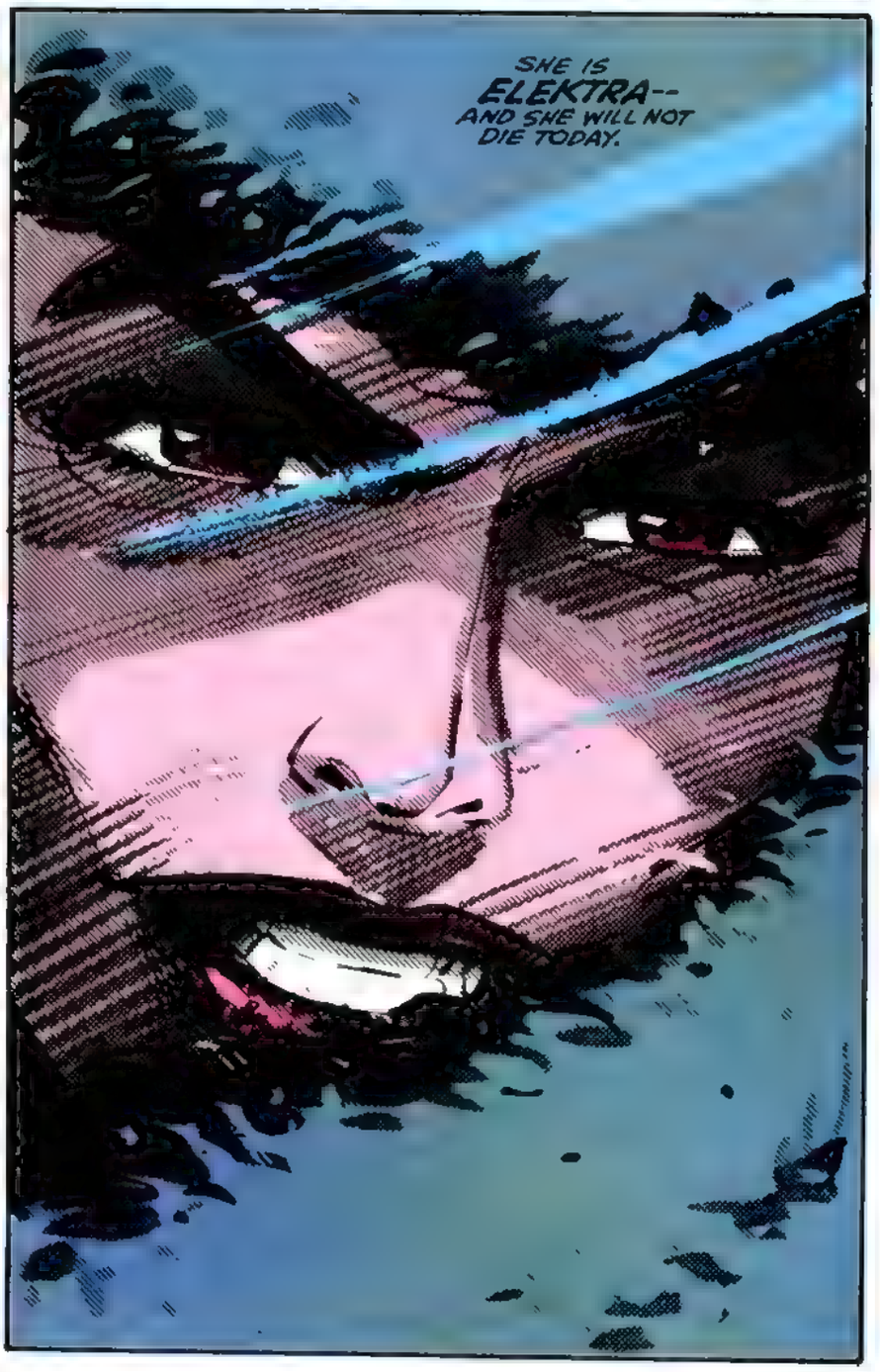
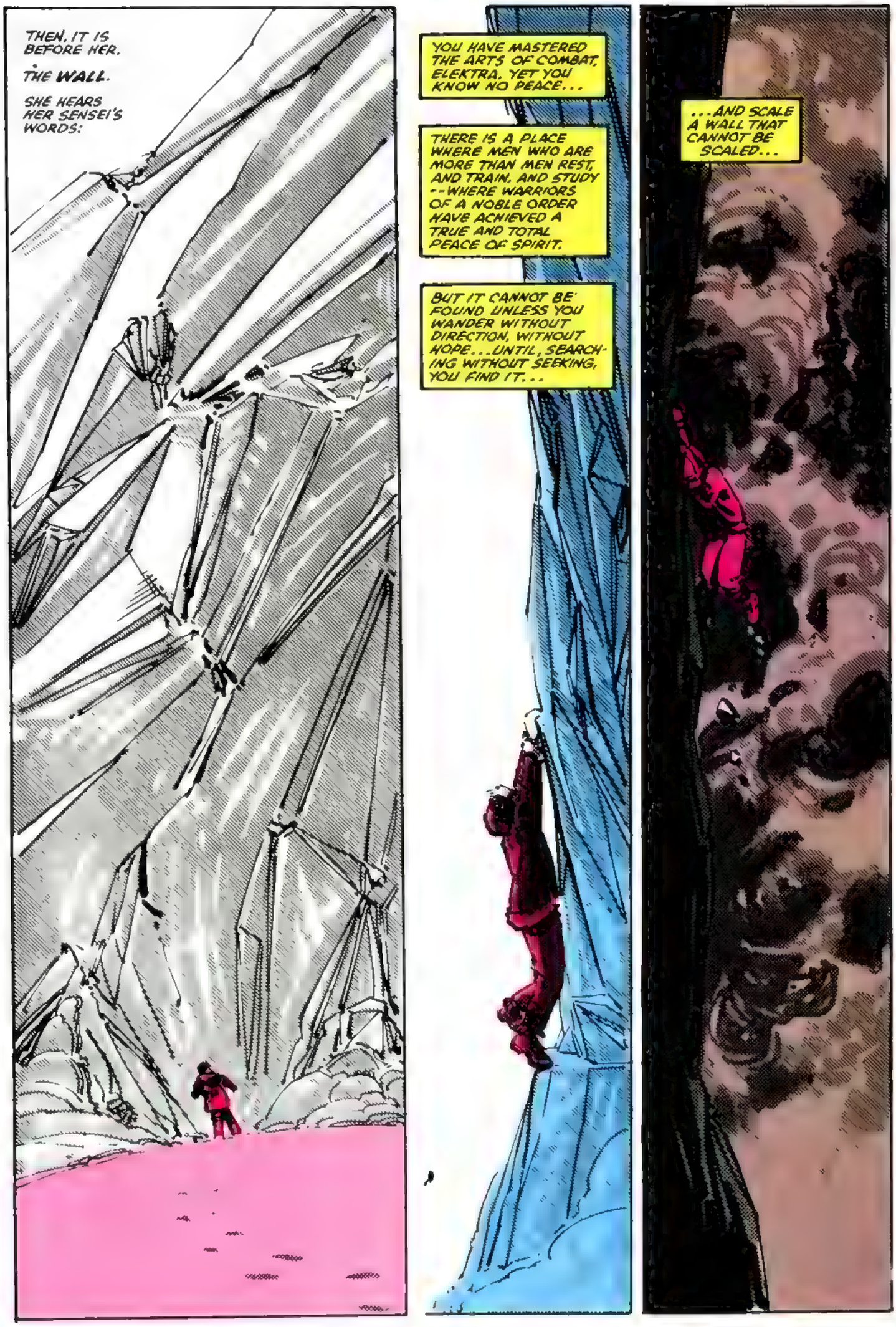

UNBIDDEN, HER THOUGHTS RETURN TO MATT --AND WHAT SHE HAS DONE TO HIM.
HE IS SUFFERING, SHE KNOWS. BUT HE IS STRONG, AND HIS LOVE FOR HIS WORLD IS EVEN GREATER THAN HIS LOVE FOR HER
FOR THE THOUSANDTH TIME, SHE WONDERS WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN--HAD NOT THE DREAM THEY SHARED BEEN MURDERED, AN ETERNITY AGO.

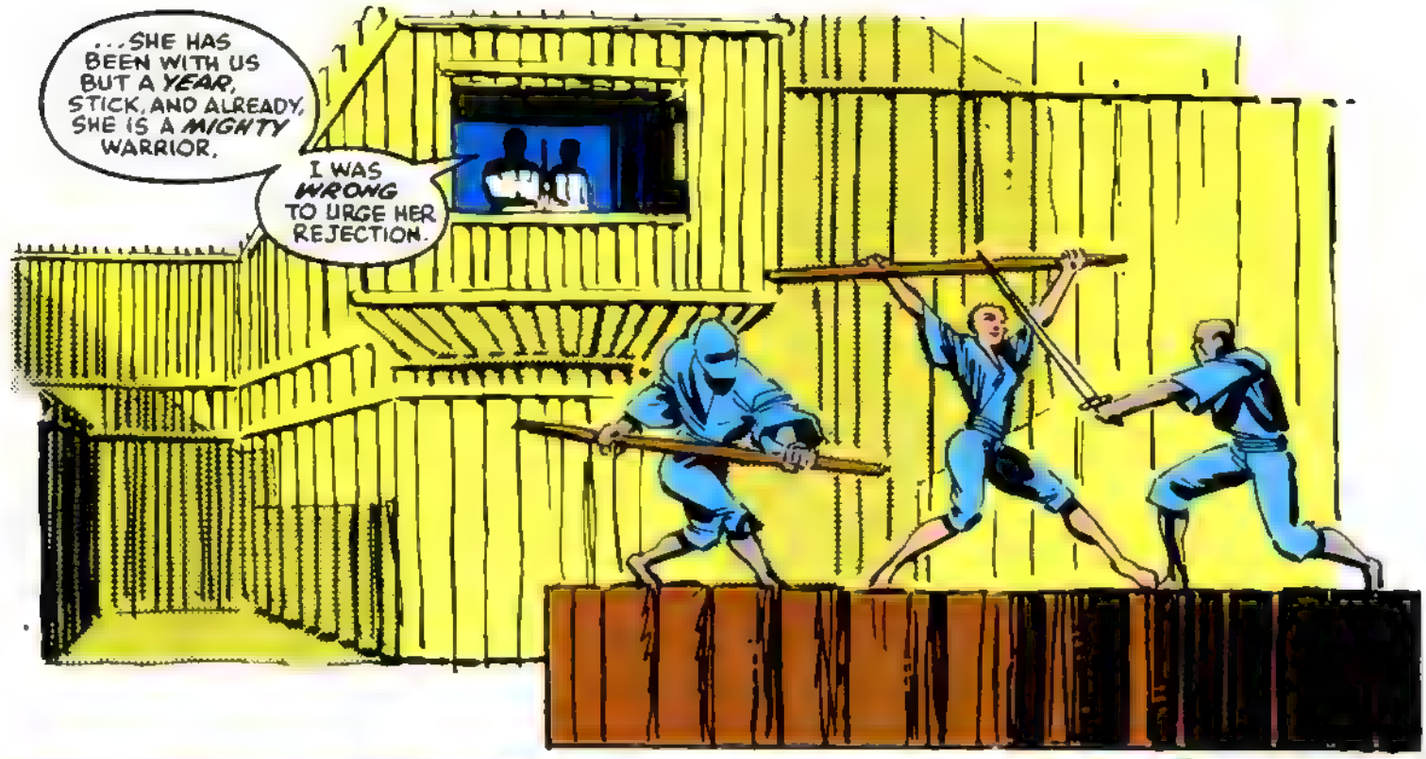
BUT THAT IS BEHIND HER, NOW.
ALL SHE HAS LEFT IS A NAKED PURPOSE--MORE DRIVING AND RUTHLESS THAN EVEN THE GALE FORCE WIND THAT THREATENS TO TOPPLE HER BACKWARD INTO THE SNOW.
THE WIND CANNOT STOP HER. NOR CAN THE KNOT IN HER STOMACH THAT HAD BEEN HUNGER--NOR THE LANCING PAIN IN HER THIGHS --NOR THE MORE FRIGHTENING NUMBNESS IN HER FEET.

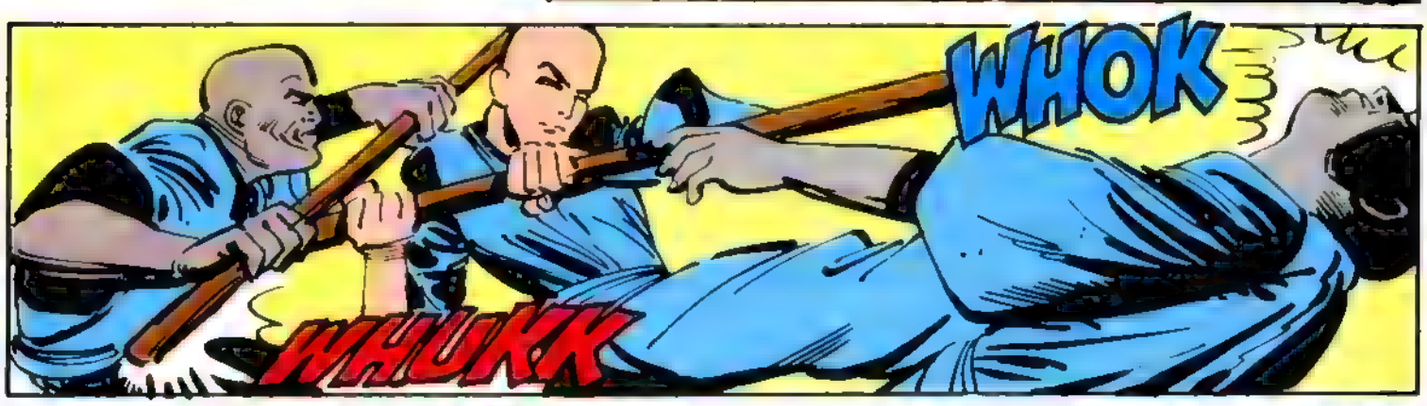

SHE IS ELEKTRA-- AND SHE WILL NOT DIE TODAY.


THEN, IT IS BEFORE HER.
THE WALL.
SHE HEARS HER SENSEI'S WORDS:
YOU HAVE MASTERED THE ARTS OF COMBAT, ELEKTRA. YET YOU KNOW NO PEACE...
THERE IS A PLACE WHERE MEN WHO ARE MORE THAN MEN REST, AND TRAIN, AND STUDY --WHERE WARRIORS OF A NOBLE ORDER HAVE ACHIEVED A TRUE AND TOTAL PEACE OF SPIRIT.
BUT IT CANNOT BE FOUND UNLESS YOU WANDER WITHOUT DIRECTION, WITHOUT HOPE...UNTIL, SEARCHING WITHOUT SEEKING, YOU FIND IT...
...AND SCALE A WALL THAT CANNOT BE SCALED...

KNOW, ELEKTRA, THAT ALL YOUR RAGE AND WILL-FULNESS ARE AS NOTHING AGAINST THE HAMMERING WIND AND THE UNFORGIVING WALL...
KNOW THAT YOU ARE NOTHING...

...FAILED THE CLIMB, STICK. WE SHOULD NOT HAVE BROUGHT HER HERE.
SHADDUP. SHE'S COMING AROUND.
SHE DOESN'T BELONG--
DO YOU KNOW WHO WE ARE, TOOTS? WHAT WE ARE?
NO.
BUT I WANT TO BE ONE OF YOU.


...SHE HAS BEEN WITH US BUT A YEAR, STICK, AND ALREADY, SHE IS A MIGHTY WARRIOR.
I WAS WRONG TO URGE HER REJECTION.


WHOK
WHUKK

NO.
YOU WERE RIGHT.

THIS IS WONDERFUL, STICK!
THIS PLACE-- SOMEHOW, IT GIVES ME STRENGTH-- POWER...
YOU GOTTA LEAVE, ELEKTRA.

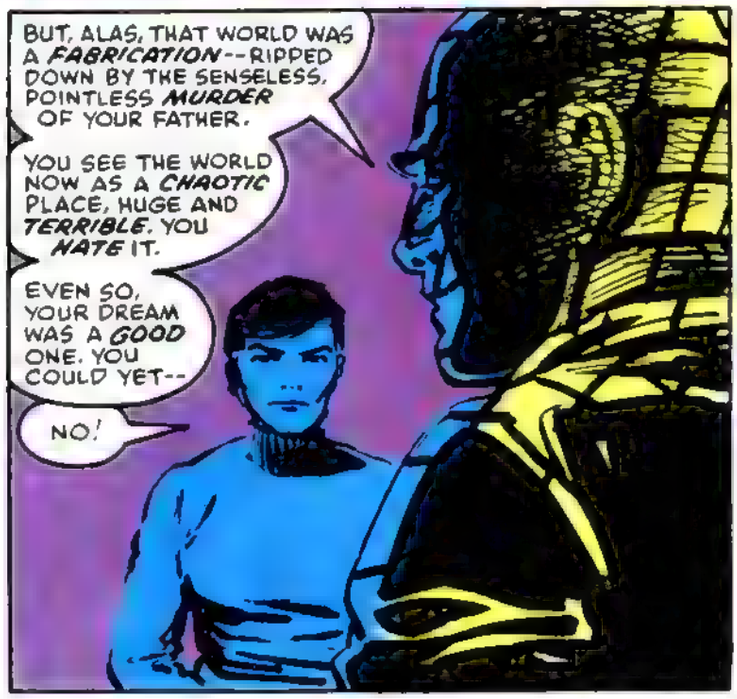
A MISSION? I KNEW THAT THIS ORDER SERVED SOME PURPOSE IN THE WORLD--
--BUT I NEVER DREAMED THAT I WOULD BE READY SO SOON...
TEACHER?

NO MISSION
JUST LEAVE. YOU DON'T BELONG WITH US.
BUT--I HAVE GIVEN YOU MY ALL. I AM AS SKILLED AS ANY OF YOU!
YOU AIN'T CLEAN.
YER FULL OF PAIN--AND HATE.
ALL YOU'VE LEARNED IS HOW TO USE THE PAIN.
THERE'S NO PLACE FOR YOU HERE.
SO GO.
STICK--PERHAPS WITH TIME, SHE...
HER WOUNDS ARE JUST TOO DEEP, STONE.
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HER DOWN THERE--SHE CAN'T SHAKE IT.
WE ARE IN A WAR, STICK. IF WE LOSE HER--
WE NEVER HAD HER. NOT FER A SECOND.
BUT--THE ENEMY--THEY MIGHT ENLIST HER.
YEAH.
THEY MIGHT.

...YOU RETURN TO JAPAN, TO MY SCHOOL, ELEKTRA. THEN YOU NEED NOT TELL ME -- THAT YOU FAILED.
NOW YOU MUST LEARN TO ACCEPT YOUR LOT. YOU MUST FIND OTHER JOYS TO FILL YOUR LIFE.

FEEL NO SHAME. STICK'S ORDER IS SEVERE. I MYSELF WAS CAST OUT, YEARS AGO. I MYSELF WAS FOUND UNWORTHY.
BUT STILL I LIVE -- TO TEACH WHAT LITTLE I KNOW.
YOU MUST FIND YOUR OWN WAY.

SENSEI, I CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY...
WHY YOU FAILED?
IT WAS YOUR FATHER, ELEKTRA YOU LOVED HIM TOO DEARLY. AND HE HELD YOU TOO CLOSELY.
HE BUILT FOR YOU A SMALL, SAFE WORLD THAT YOU LOVED. YOUR DREAM, IN COLLEGE, WAS TO SERVE THE WORLD.


BUT, ALAS, THAT WORLD WAS A FABRICATION -- RIPPED DOWN BY THE SENSELESS, POINTLESS MURDER OF YOUR FATHER.
YOU SEE THE WORLD NOW AS A CHAOTIC PLACE, HUGE AND TERRIBLE. YOU HATE IT.
EVEN SO, YOUR DREAM WAS A GOOD ONE. YOU COULD YET--
NO!

THIS WAR THAT STICK SPOKE OF -- I AM A PART OF IT. I CAN FEEL THAT.
I MUST PROVE MYSELF TO STICK ...SOMEHOW.

THERE IS NOTHING TO PROVE, ELEKTRA. ACCEPT THAT.

IF I COULD STRIKE A BLOW AT THE ENEMY ... THAT WOULD SHOW...

YOU WOULD FIGHT THE HAND?
ELEKTRA, THEY ARE MANY --AND DEADLY. YOU COULD NOT HOPE--

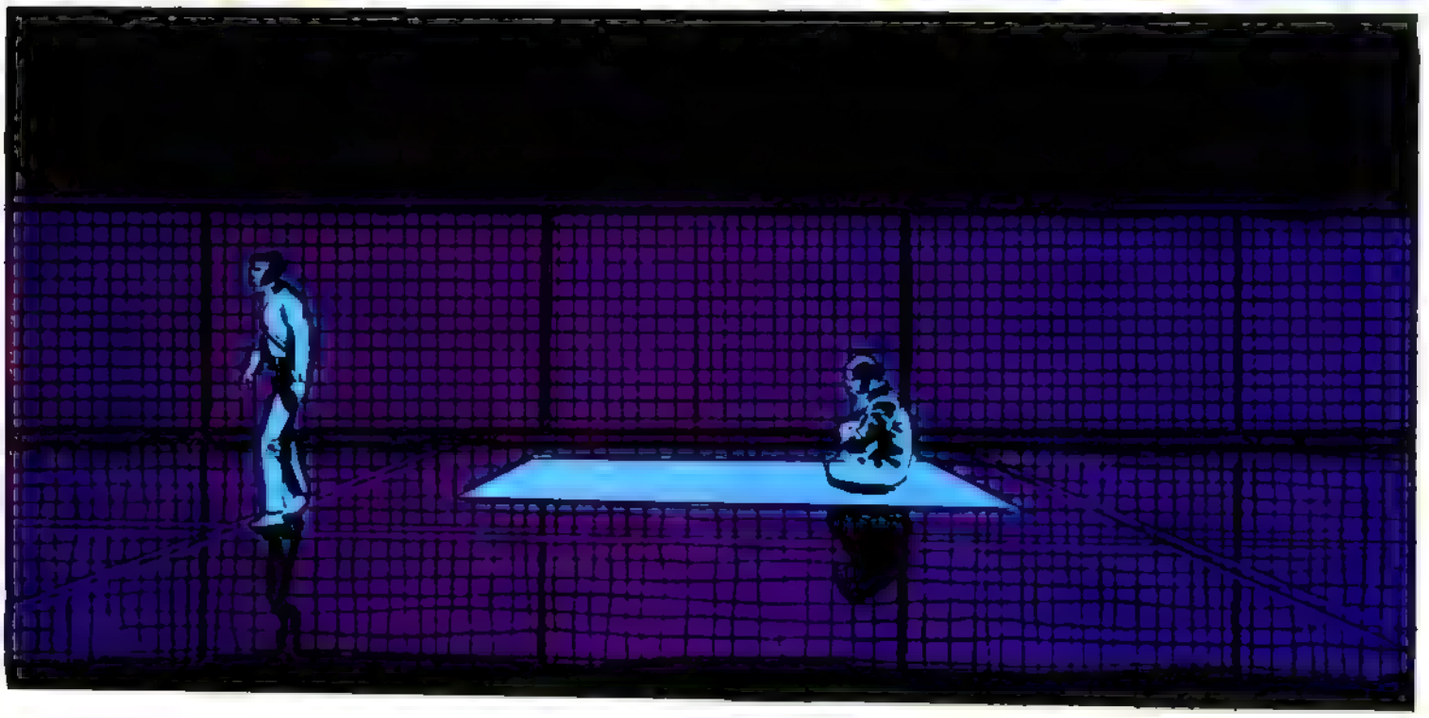
NOT FIGHT THEM. DECEIVE THEM.
I SHALL JOIN THEIR ORDER--LEARN WHAT I CAN-- AND USE THAT KNOWLEDGE AGAINST THEM.

WHAT YOU PLAN IS UN-THINKABLE. IMPOSSIBLE.
THEIR WAYS ARE DARK AND MYSTIC. THEY WILL TRICK YOU-- CORRUPT YOU--POSSESS YOU...

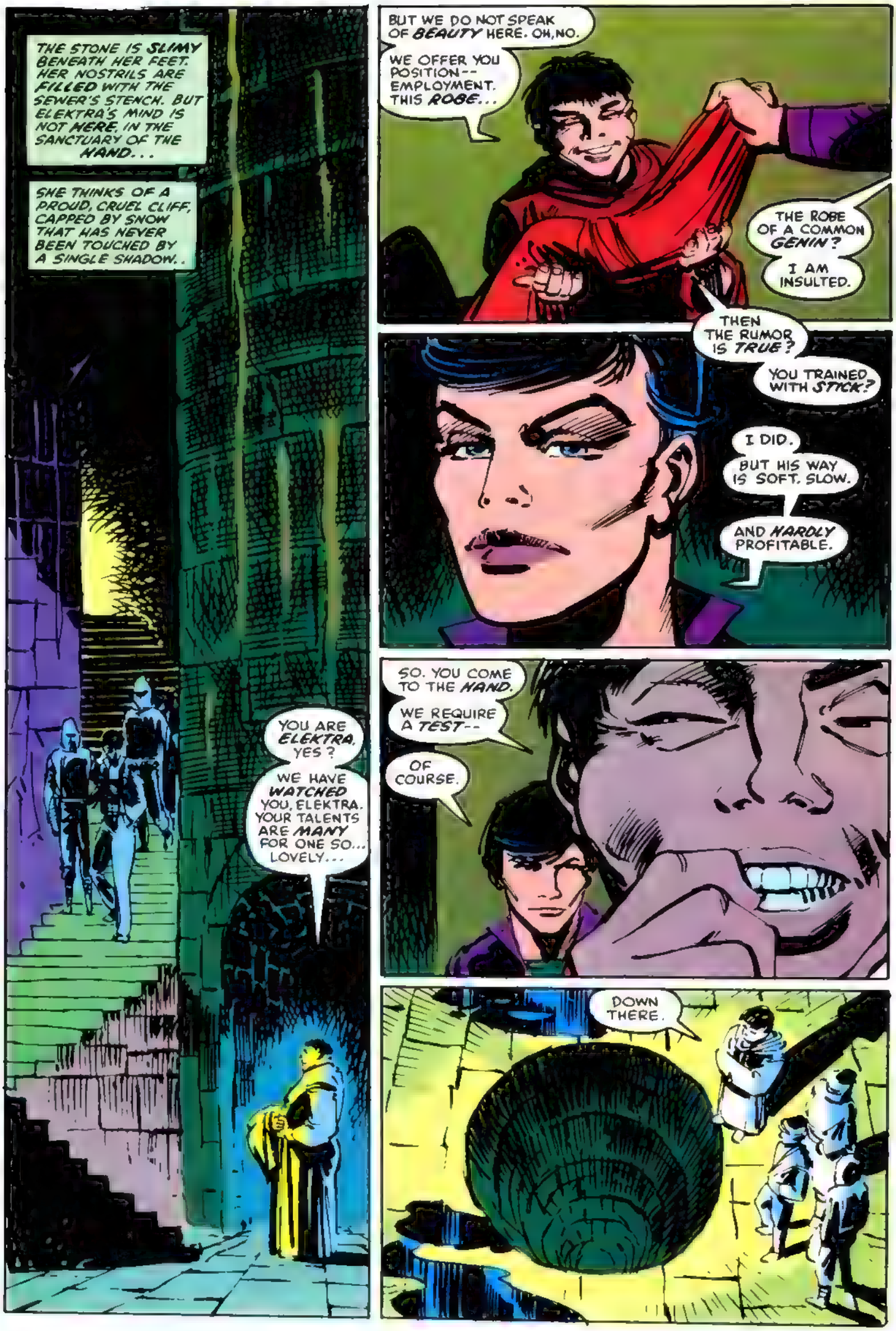
WE SHALL SEE.
WILL YOU HELP ME FIND THEM?

NO. BUT YOU WILL NEED NO HELP.

THEY HAVE HEARD OF YOU BY NOW.
THEY WILL FIND YOU.



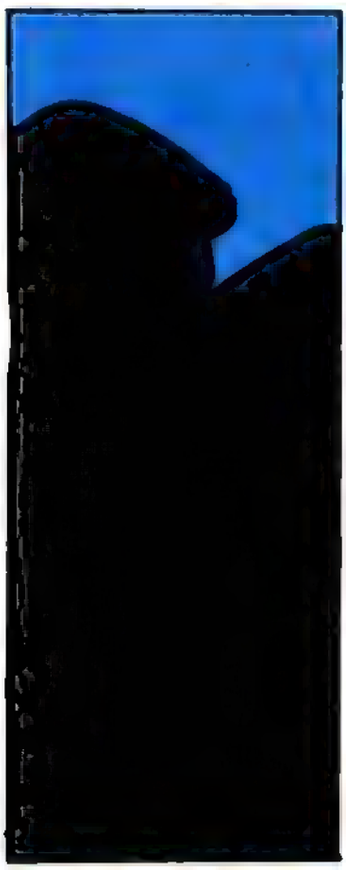
PITY ELEKTRA. THOUGH SHE IS COURAGEOUS, SHE IS YOUNG...
...AND INNOCENT IN THE WAYS OF EVIL MEN...
NNGG!
URRKK!
WOULD ONE OF YOU PLEASE HAND ME MY CLOTHES?


THE STONE IS SLIMY BENEATH HER FEET. HER NOSTRILS ARE FILLED WITH THE SEWER'S STENCH. BUT ELEKTRA'S MIND IS NOT HERE, IN THE SANCTUARY OF THE HAND...
SHE THINKS OF A PROUD, CRUEL CLIFF, CAPPED BY SNOW THAT HAS NEVER BEEN TOUCHED BY A SINGLE SHADOW..
YOU ARE ELEKTRA, YES?
WE HAVE WATCHED YOU, ELEKTRA. YOUR TALENTS ARE MANY FOR ONE SO... LOVELY...
BUT WE DO NOT SPEAK OF BEAUTY HERE. OH, NO.
WE OFFER YOU POSITION-- EMPLOYMENT. THIS ROBE...
THE ROBE OF A COMMON GENIN?
I AM INSULTED.
THEN THE RUMOR IS TRUE?
YOU TRAINED WITH STICK?
I DID.
BUT HIS WAY IS SOFT, SLOW.
AND HARDLY PROFITABLE.
SO. YOU COME TO THE HAND.
WE REQUIRE A TEST--
OF COURSE.
DOWN THERE.

WHOK

KRAK

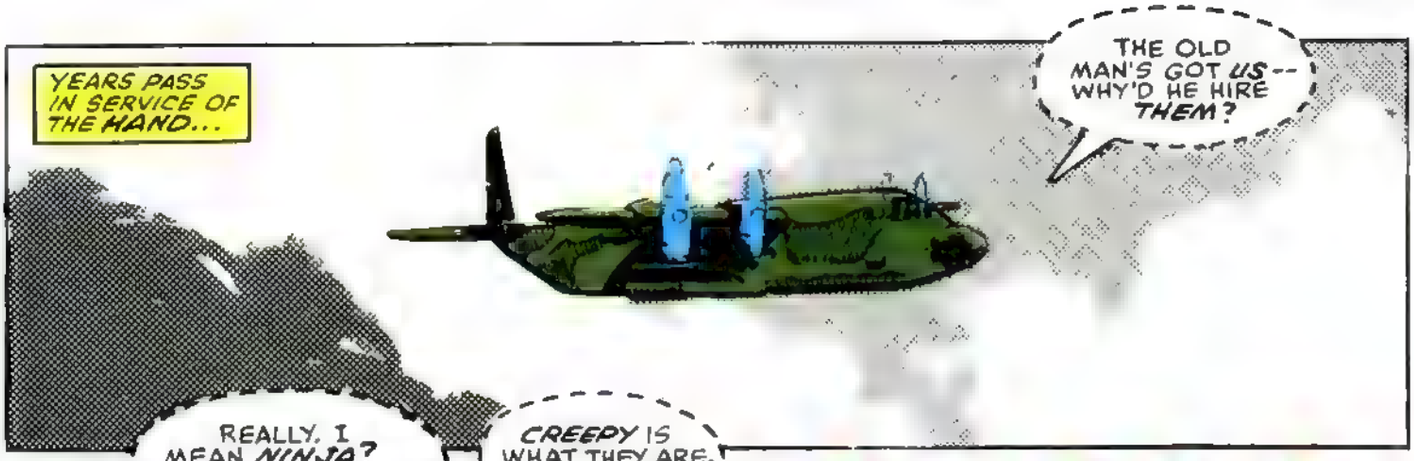
SHHKK

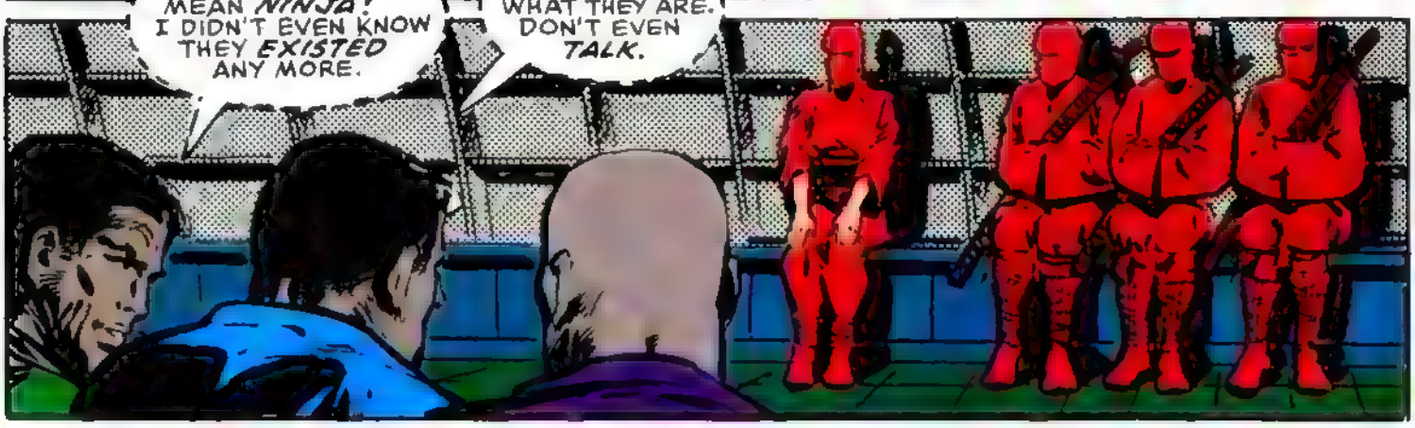


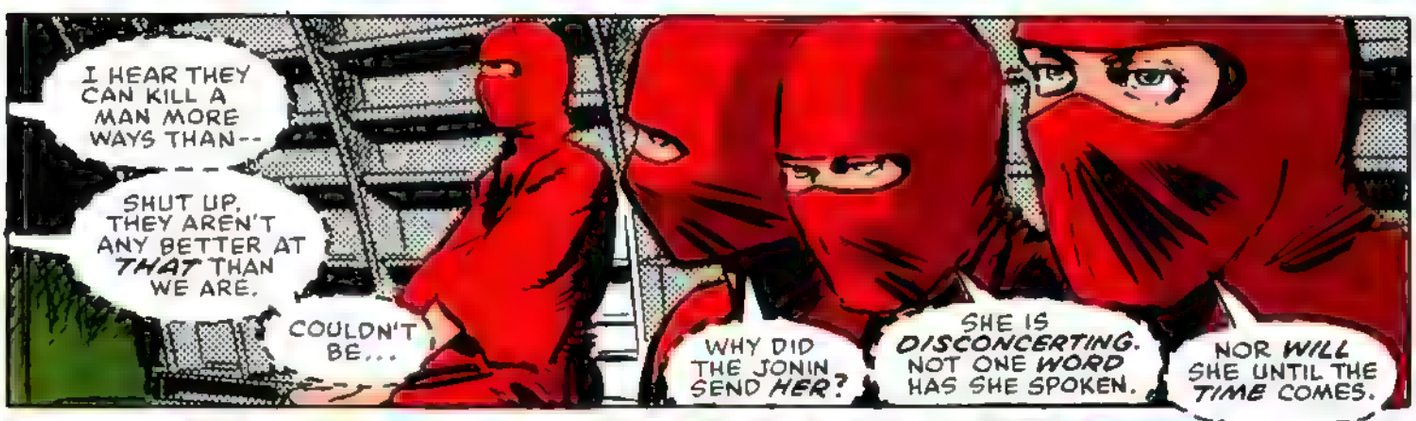
SENSEI...!
NO...

HE WAS DIFFICULT TO CATCH, YES.
BUT, ONCE DRUGGED, HE SERVED HIS PURPOSE.
WELCOME, ELEKTRA. WELCOME TO THE HAND.

SENSEI...
SHE DOES NOT SCREAM. SHE THINKS ONLY OF A CLIFF SHE WILL NEVER CLIMB.
A PEACE SHE WILL NEVER KNOW...

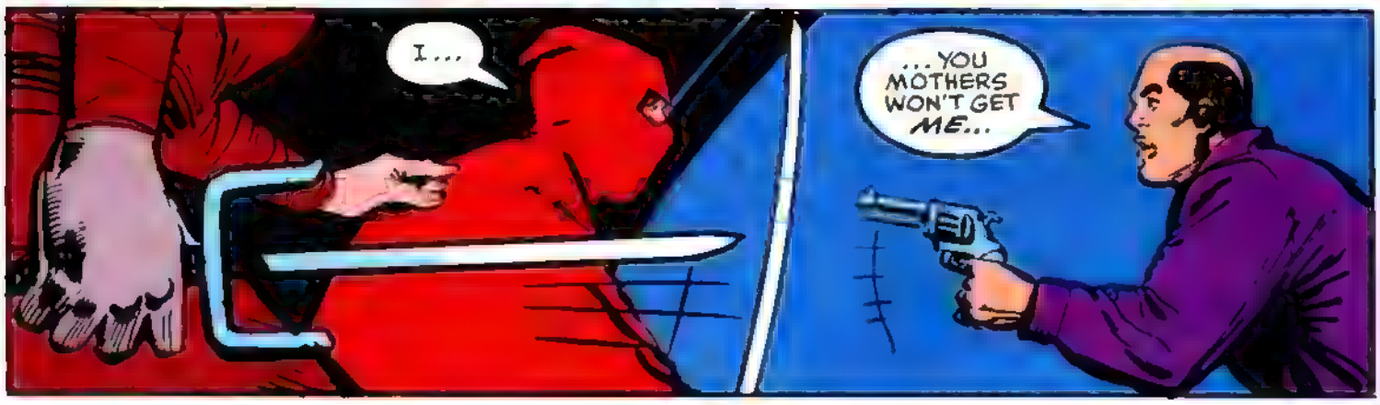

YEARS PASS IN SERVICE OF THE HAND...
THE OLD MAN'S GOT US -- WHY'D HE HIRE THEM?

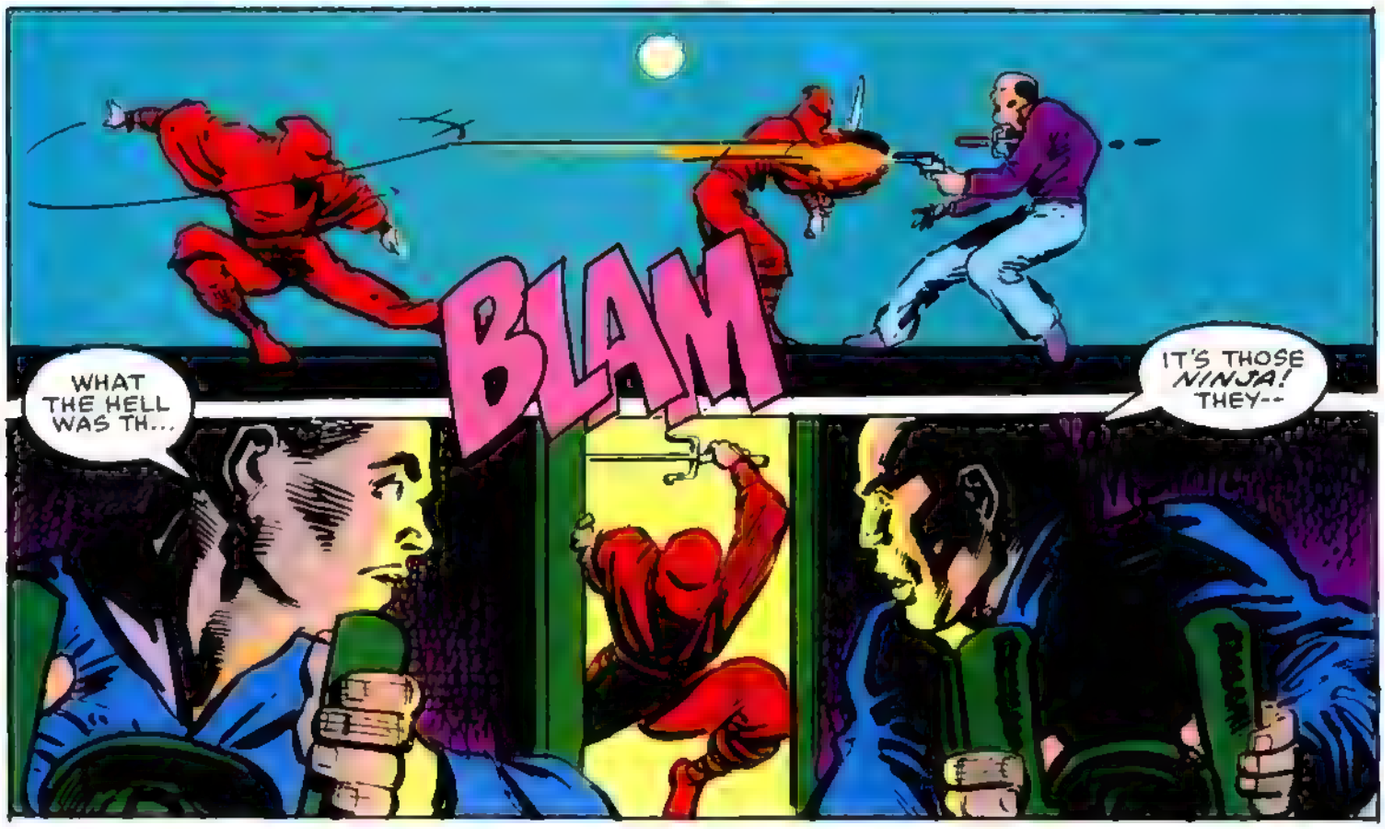

REALLY. I MEAN NINJA? I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THEY EXISTED ANY MORE.
CREEPY IS WHAT THEY ARE. DON'T EVEN TALK.


I HEAR THEY CAN KILL A MAN MORE WAYS THAN--
SHUT UP. THEY AREN'T ANY BETTER AT THAT THAN WE ARE.
COULDN'T BE...
WHY DID THE JONIN SEND HER?
SHE IS DISCONCERTING. NOT ONE WORD HAS SHE SPOKEN.
NOR WILL SHE UNTIL THE TIME COMES.

IT IS SAID SHE STILL CARRIES THE WEAPONS WITH WHICH SHE KILLED HER OWN SENSEI...
SILENCE, GENIN. YOUR WORDS ARE WASTED.
AND THE TIME HAS COME FOR ACTION.

CHOOSE YOUR TARGETS.
SILENTLY, NOW.





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YOUR FAILURE ENDANGERED OUR MISSION, GENIN.
DO NOT LIE. YOUR HESITATION WAS NOT DUE TO INEXPERIENCE.
IT WAS CONCERN. YOU DID NOT WANT TO KILL.
TELL ME, GENIN--HOW DID ONE SO WEAK BECOME ONE OF THE HAND?
MY STORY... WOULD MEAN NOTHING TO YOU, ELEKTRA.
BUT I HAVE HEARD...THAT YOU ARE AS TRAPPED IN THIS ORDER AS I...
THAT IS HOW THE HAND WORKS, ISN'T IT?
BUT MY CORRUPTION IS NOT YET COMPLETE --AND, PERHAPS, NEITHER IS YOURS.
PERHAPS... THIS IS OUR CHANCE...
I SHALL SEAL THE CABIN--AND WE HAVE A PLANE...
NO.
GO TO YOUR BROTHERS.

ANOTHER SUCCESS, ELEKTRA. YOU RISE THROUGH OUR RANKS SO QUICKLY...
I AM HUMBLED, JONIN!
HUMBLED? NO, NOT YET...
YOUR REPORT IS COMPLETE, THEN?
...YES, JONIN.
THEN LET ME PRESENT YOU...WITH A GIFT.
...A SPECIAL GIFT FRESHLY PREPARED, JUST FOR YOU.
YOU RECOGNIZE HIM, YES?
AH, ELEKTRA ...STILL YOU ARE NOT WITH US. NOT TRULY. ELSE YOU WOULD HAVE REPORTED THE GENIN'S BREACH.
HIS WEAKNESS ...
WHAT WILL BE MY PUNISMENT?
GENIN-- YOU ARE DISMISSED ...
NO PUNISHMENT, ELEKTRA. A DEMONSTRATION IS ALL I SEEK.
A DEMONSTRATION OF YOUR DEDICATION-- YOUR FIDELITY TO THE HAND...
REJOICE, ELEKTRA--

I SHALL HONOR YOU--
--MAKE YOU THE CHALICE OF MY SPIRIT...
JONIN, YOU HAVE BROKEN ME, IN MANY WAYS...
HKKKK--!
STILL, I HAVE LEARNED MUCH FROM YOU...
D--DON'T--
...ENOUGH TO SERVE ME WELL...
JONIN--!
SHE... HAS LEFT US, GENIN. SHE... HAS BETRAYED OUR ORDER...
SHE IS PROUD, THAT ONE. PROUD. BUT WE WILL FIND HER, IN TIME...
I WILL SEE HER DIE...
THEY WILL NOT FIND HER, NOT FOR YEARS. SHE FLEES JAPAN...

:SKREKK: FOX TO MONGOOSE. FOX TO MONGOOSE. EMERGENCY!
REPEAT. EMERGENCY. :SKREKK: COBRA HAS INFILTRATED. INTRUDER ON SHIP.
ABORT MISSION, MONGOOSE. REPEAT. ABORT MISSION.
DO YOU COPY, MONGOOSE?
MONGOOSE-- DO YOU COPY?

15 SEC
14. SEC
13. SEC
12. SEC
11. SEC
10. SEC
9. SEC
8. SEC
7. SEC
6. SEC
5 SEC
4 SEC
3 SEC
2 SEC
1 SEC
CHOK
CAUTION: EXPLOSIVES
KLUGG

WE ARE HOURS -- DAYS -- FROM THE NEAREST LAND ONLY BY A COMBINED EFFORT CAN WE CROSS THAT DISTANCE
IT WOULD BE STUPID OF YOU TO KILL ME

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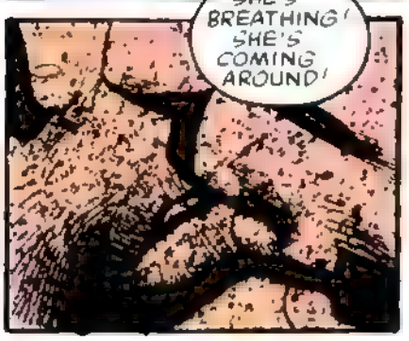
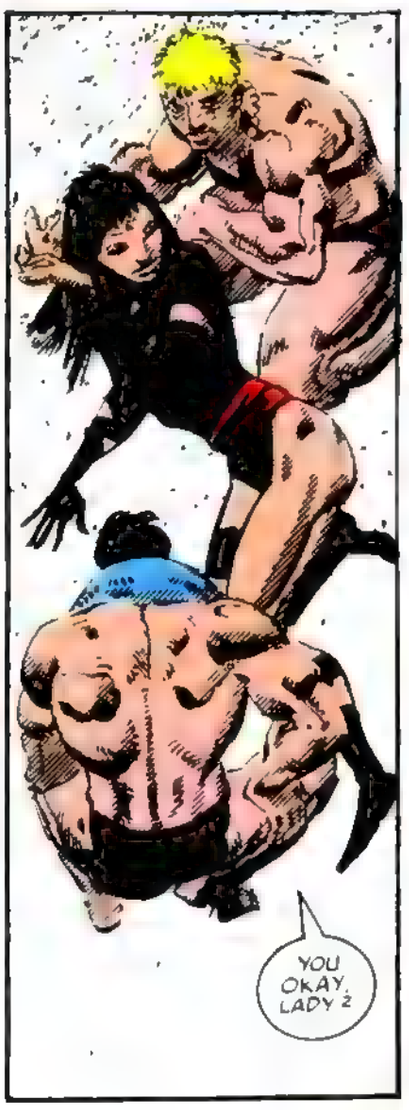
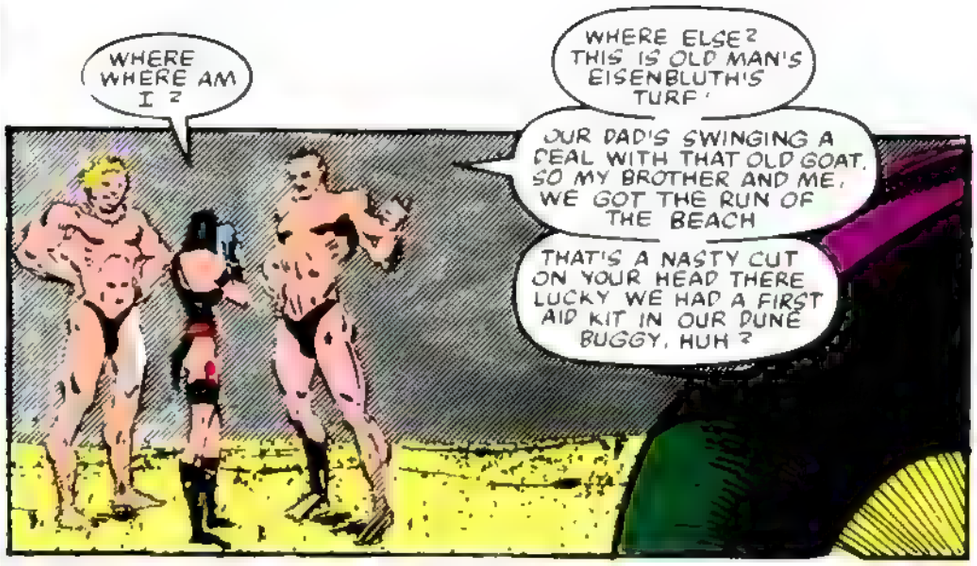
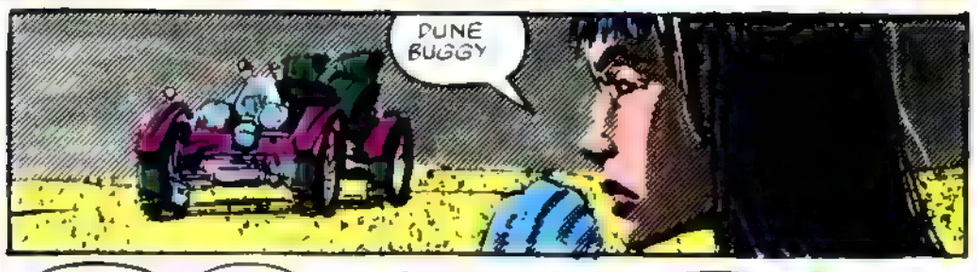
KOFF!

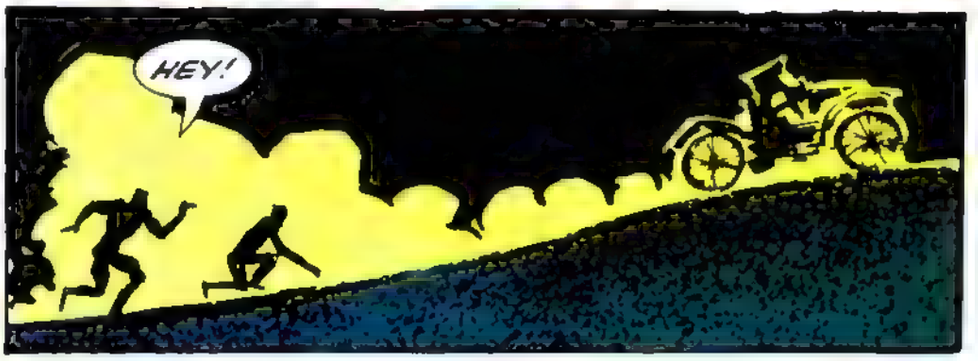

SHE'S BREATHING! SHE'S COMING AROUND!


YOU OKAY, LADY?

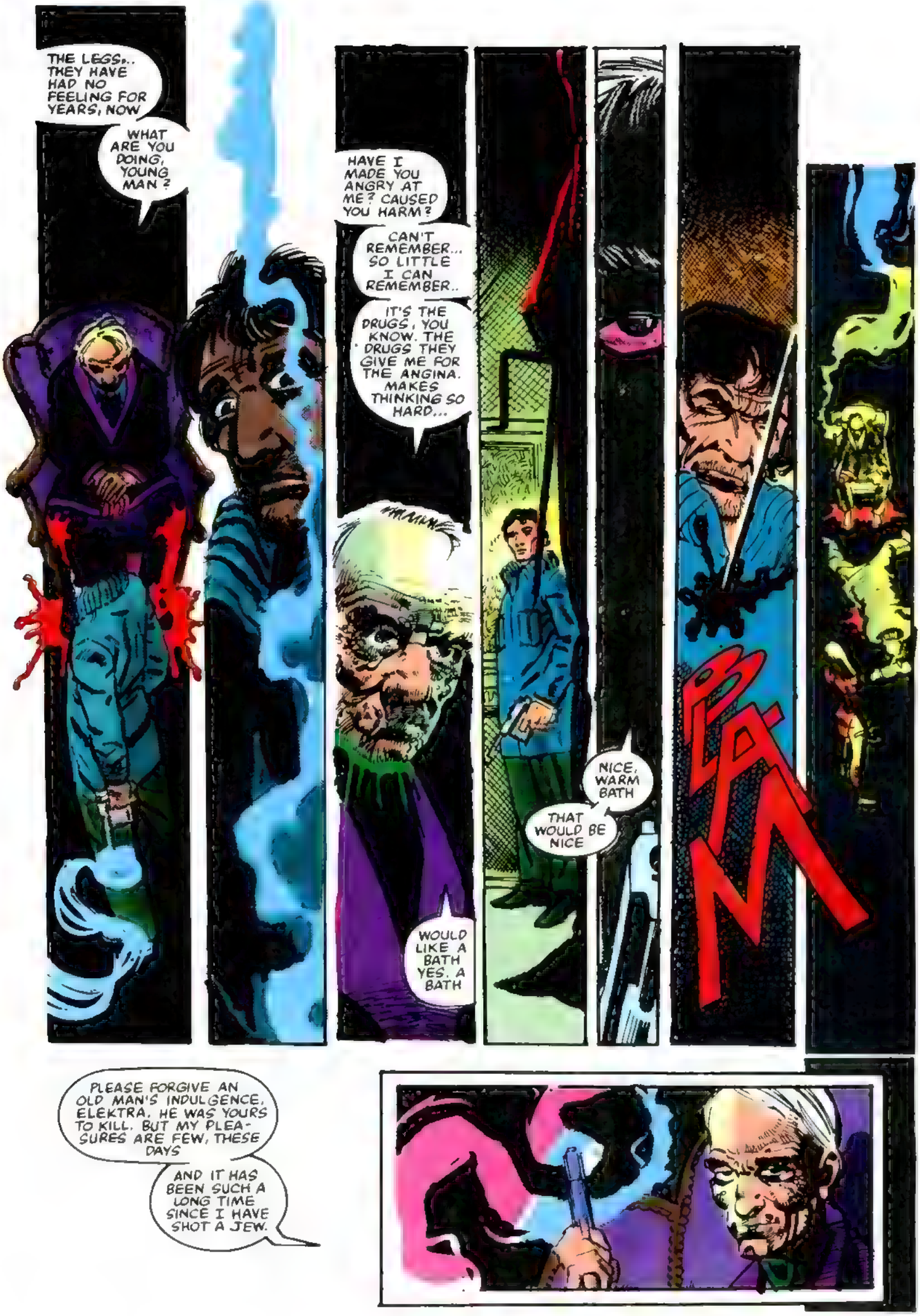

WHERE WHERE AM I?
WHERE ELSE? THIS IS OLD MAN'S EISENBLUTH'S TURF!
OUR DAD'S SWINGING A DEAL WITH THAT OLD GOAT, SO MY BROTHER AND ME, WE GOT THE RUN OF THE BEACH
THAT'S A NASTY CUT ON YOUR HEAD THERE LUCKY WE HAD A FIRST AID KIT IN OUR DUNE BUGGY, HUH?


DUNE BUGGY

HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU? I--UFF!
STEADY LADY
MY--MY EAR RING! I HAD IT WHEN I STOOD UP OH, DEAR!
IT'S WORTH SO MUCH TO ME
NO SWEAT WE'LL FIND IT.
MUST BE IN THE SAND SOMEWHERE
FOUND IT! I FOUND


HEY!

IT'S CROAKED
WHAT'S THE OLD MAN FEEDING THESE CRITTERS, ANYWAY?
THAT'S THE SECOND ONE TO BUY IT TONIGHT
YOU THOUGHT THAT SINKING MY SHIP WOULD STOP ME, MONSTER
YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE SAFE
ALL THE DEMONS OF HELL COULDN'T KEEP ME FROM YOU, MONSTER
I WILL HEAR YOU SCREAM
BLAM
BLAM



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TIME IS OCCUPIED. THE MISSIONS ARE MANY, THE MONEY GOOD.

BUT STILL SHE IS A **TORTURED** SOUL. THE KILLINGS, ONE AFTER ANOTHER, DO NOT **EASE** HER PAIN. THE PROFITS DO NOT MAKE HER **RICHER**.

THEN COMES THE DAY WHEN SHE FOLLOWS A BOUNTY TO NEW YORK CITY ...AND EVERYTHING **CHANGES**...

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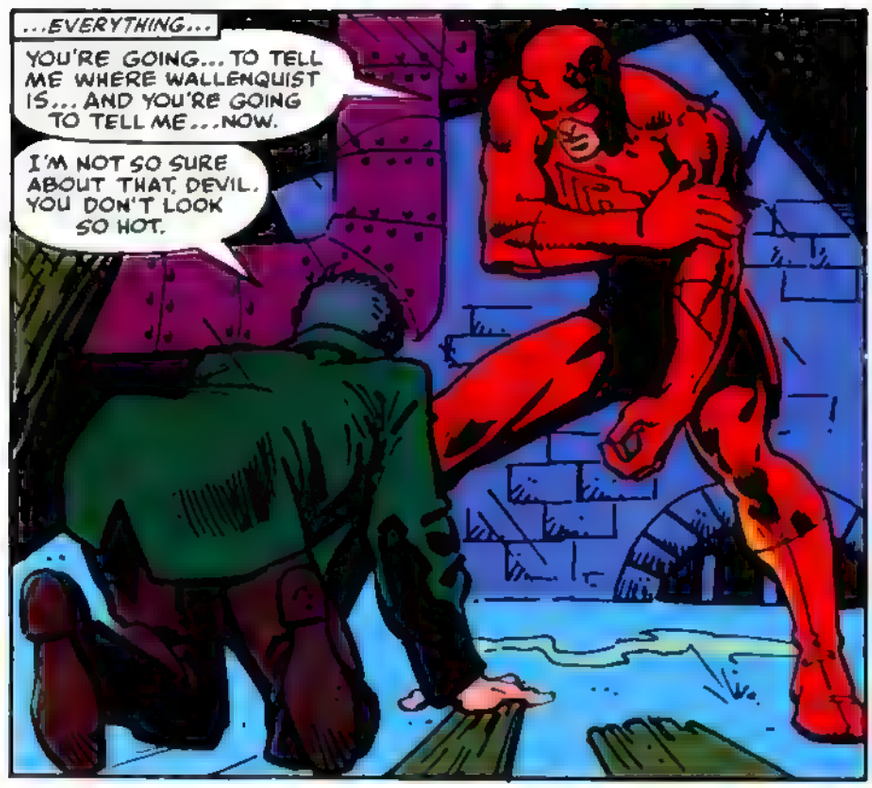
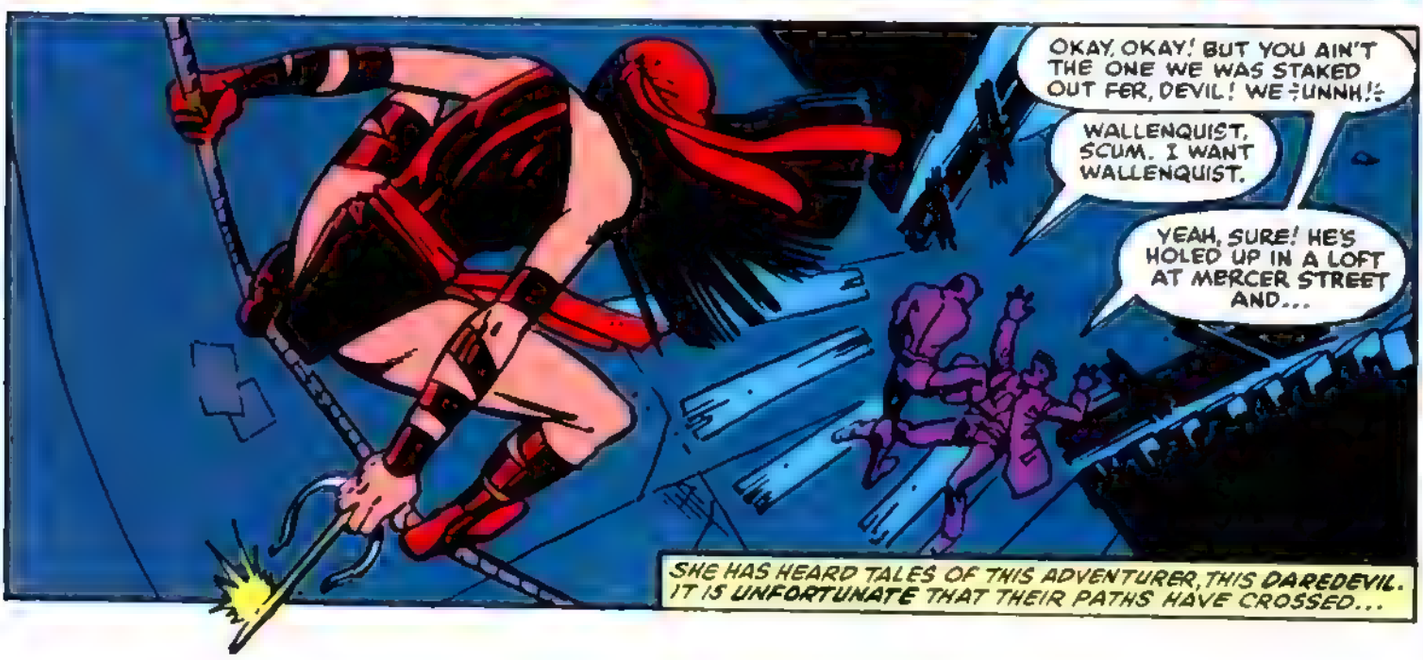
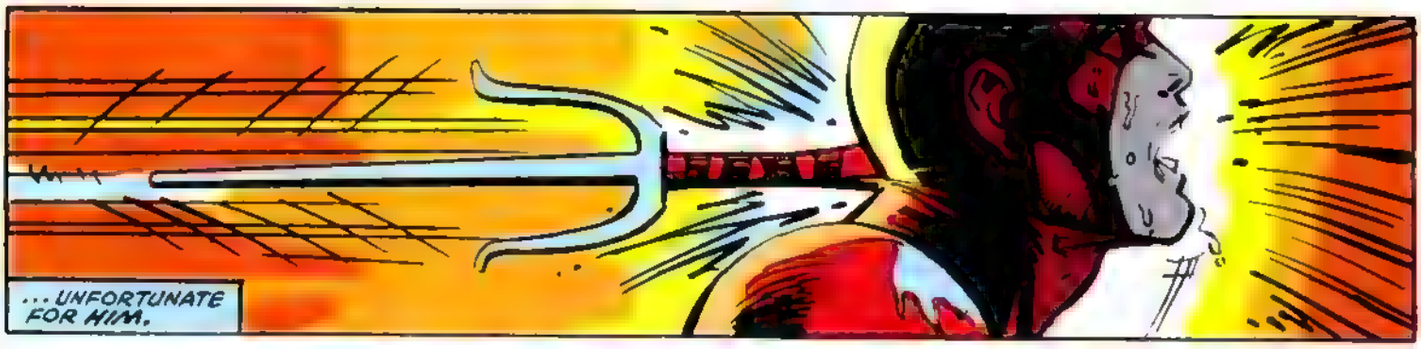

...EVERYTHING...
YOU'RE GOING... TO TELL ME WHERE WALLENQUIST IS... AND YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME... NOW.
I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THAT, DEVIL. YOU DON'T LOOK SO HOT.

IN FACT, YOU LOOK LOUSY. THAT EXPLOSION MUST'VE REALLY KICKED YER GUTS IN.
SO I DON'T GOTTA LISTEN TO YOU, AND I DON'T GOTTA TALK TO YOU--

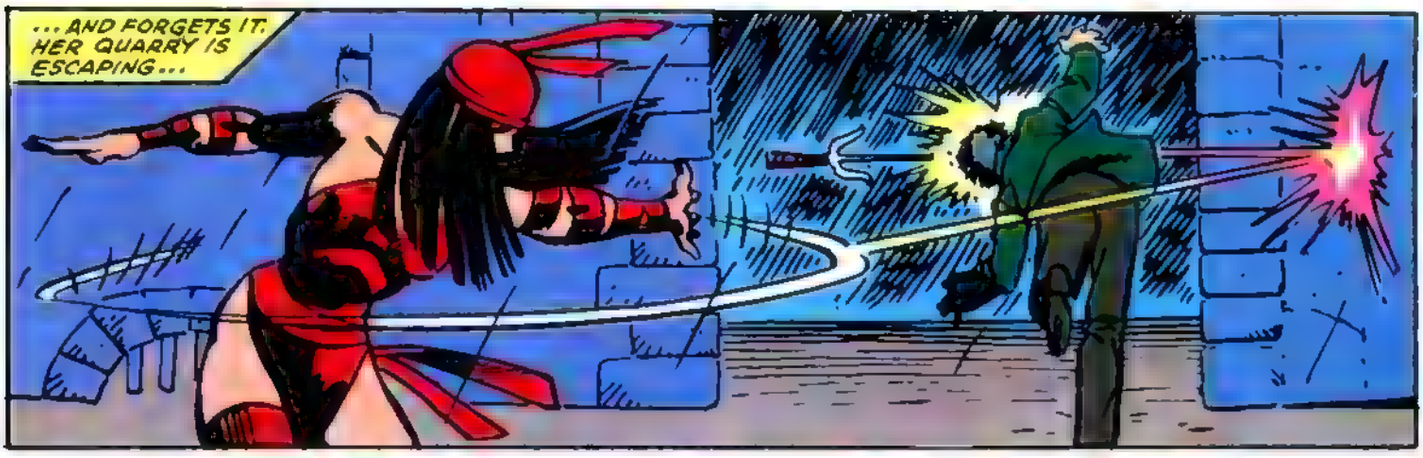
--WHEN ALL IT'LL TAKE IS A HUNK OF LEAD IN THE RIGHT PLACE TO GET RID OF YOU ONCE AND FER ALL!

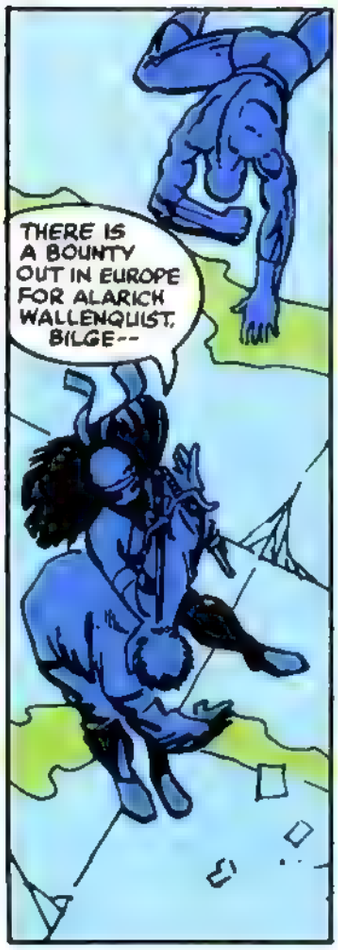
BLAMM
YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK... AND I'M OUT OF... PATIENCE.
TALK!
URRGH!


OKAY, OKAY! BUT YOU AIN'T THE ONE WE WAS STAKED OUT FER, DEVIL! WE UNNH!
WALLENQUIST, SCUM. I WANT WALLENQUIST.
YEAH, SURE! HE'S HOLED UP IN A LOFT AT MERCER STREET AND...
SHE HAS HEARD TALES OF THIS ADVENTURER, THIS DAREDEVIL. IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THEIR PATHS HAVE CROSSED...


...UNFORTUNATE FOR HIM.

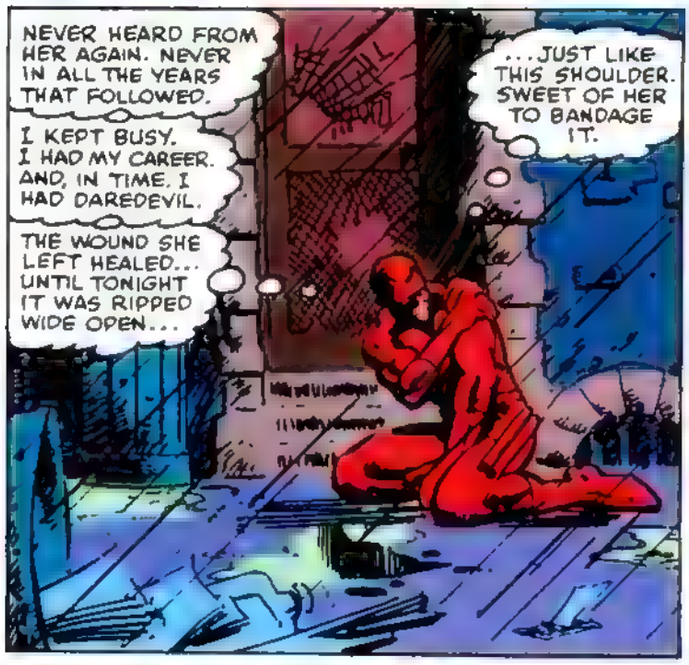
SHE CLOSES IN, TO REMOVE HIM QUICKLY--
--AND FOR A MOMENT, HER HEART STOPS. THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT HIM... SOMETHING ABOUT HIS JAW, HIS MOUTH...
BRIEFLY, A MEMORY COMES, HOT AND FRESH AND HURTFUL. SHE LASHES OUT AT IT...

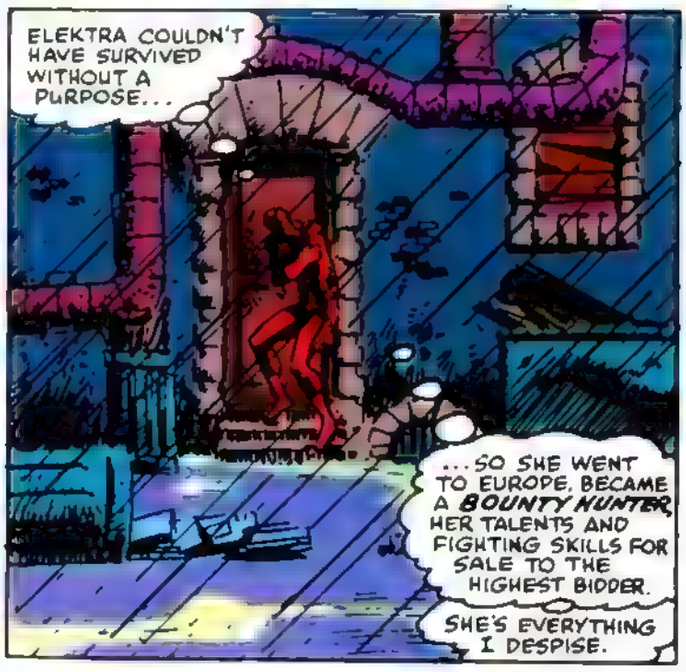

...AND FORGETS IT. HER QUARRY IS ESCAPING...


THERE IS A BOUNTY OUT IN EUROPE FOR ALARICK WALLENQUIST, BILGE--

--A BOUNTY I INTEND TO COLLECT.
YOU ARE GOING TO HELP ME CAPTURE HIM, OR I AM GOING TO KILL YOU.
IT IS AS SIMPLE AS THAT.

THAT VOICE--
ELEKTRA?!





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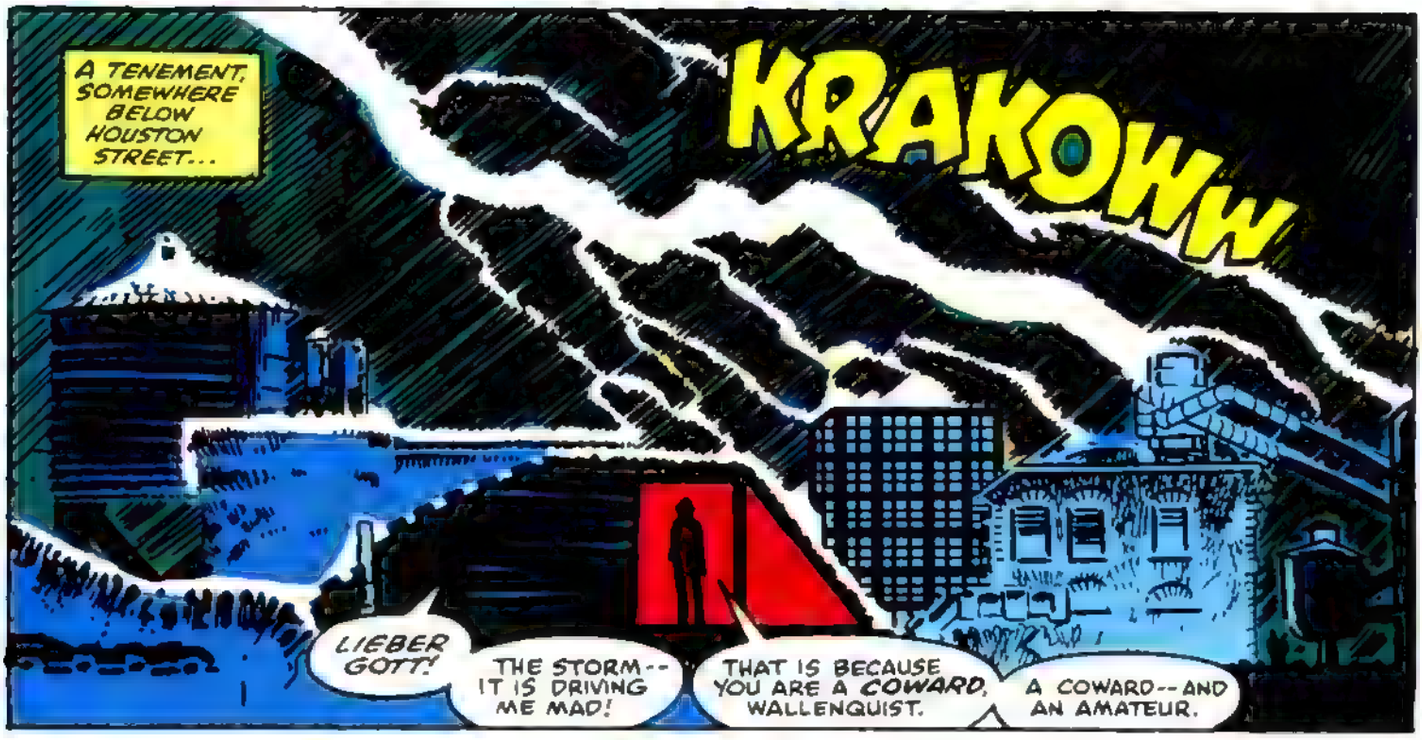
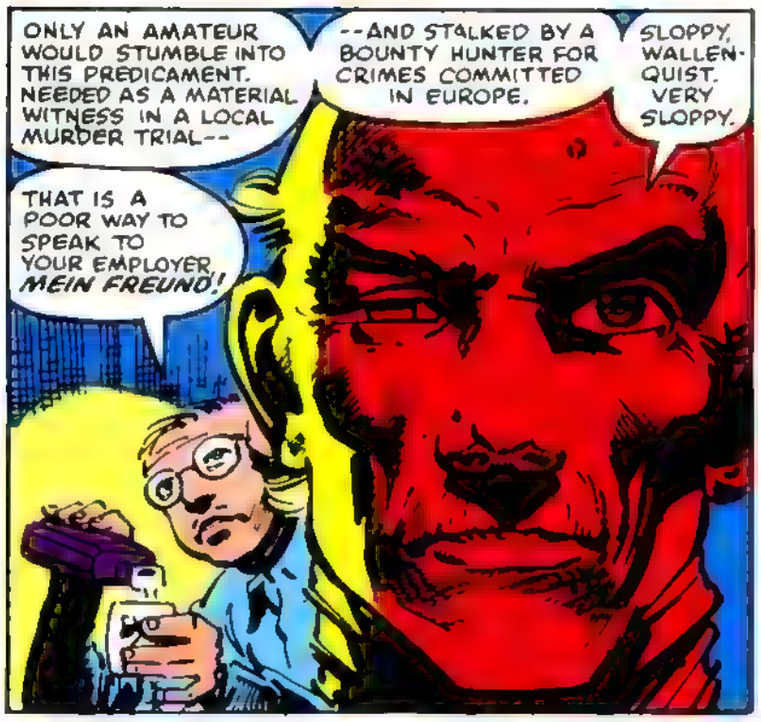
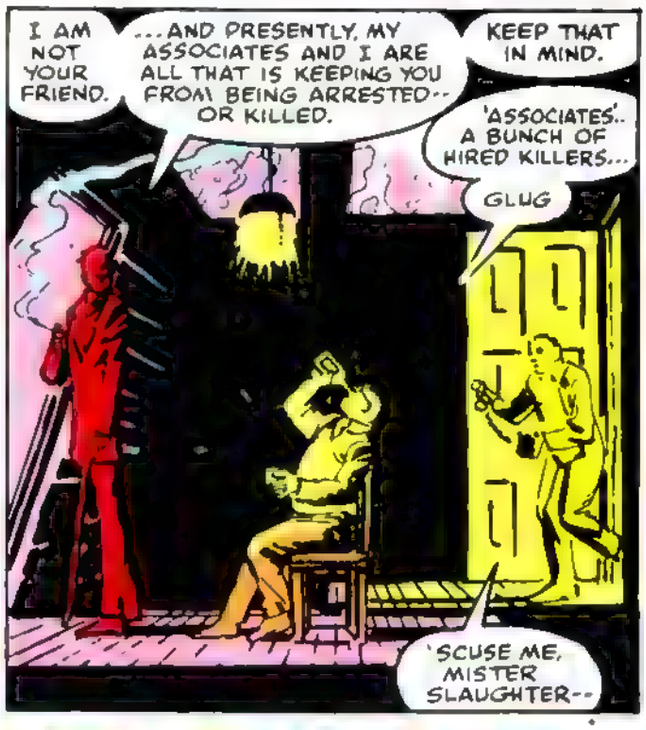

A TENEMENT, SOMEWHERE BELOW HOUSTON STREET...
KRAKOWW
LIEBER GOTT!
THE STORM-- IT IS DRIVING ME MAD!
THAT IS BECAUSE YOU ARE A COWARD, WALLENQUIST.
A COWARD--AND AN AMATEUR.


ONLY AN AMATEUR WOULD STUMBLE INTO THIS PREDICAMENT. NEEDED AS A MATERIAL WITNESS IN A LOCAL MURDER TRIAL--
--AND STALKED BY A BOUNTY HUNTER FOR CRIMES COMMITTED IN EUROPE.
SLOPPY, WALLENQUIST. VERY SLOPPY.
THAT IS A POOR WAY TO SPEAK TO YOUR EMPLOYER, MEIN FREUND!

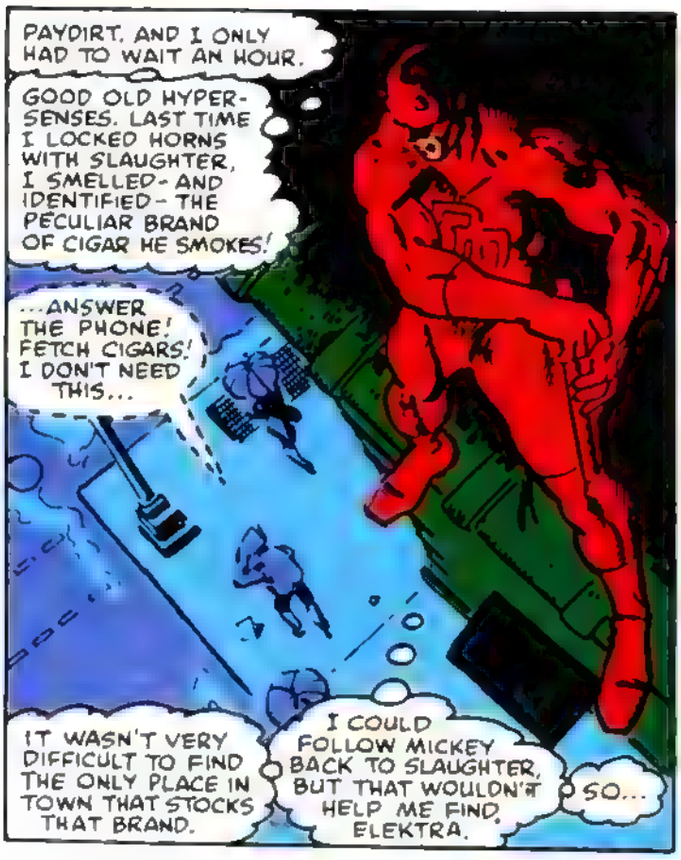

I AM NOT YOUR FRIEND.
...AND PRESENTLY, MY ASSOCIATES AND I ARE ALL THAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM BEING ARRESTED-- OR KILLED.
KEEP THAT IN MIND.
'ASSOCIATES'.. A BUNCH OF HIRED KILLERS...
GLUG
'SCUSE ME, MISTER SLAUGHTER--

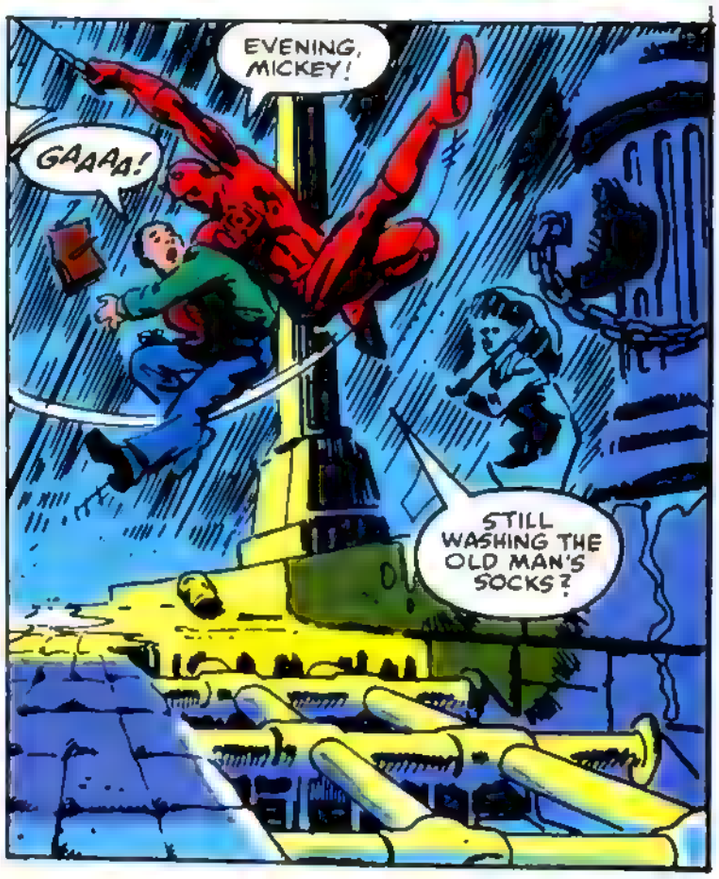
"--BILGE FINALLY CALLED IN."
YES SIR, MISTER SLAUGHTER. I KNOW I'M LATE. I RAN INTO A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE...
DAREDEVIL SHOWED UP, AND TRIED TO MAKE ME AND TURK TELL HIM WHERE YOU GOT WALLENQUIST.
NO SIR. TURK ALMOST TALKED, BUT I SCRAGGED 'EM BOTH WITH A BOTTLE OF NITRO.
YES, SIR. IT'S ALL SET UP. THE SEA-PLANE WILL BE READY TO TAKE WALLENQUIST OUTTA TOWN AT FOUR O'CLOCK, JUST LIKE YO WANTED.
WHAT? NO SIR, NO SIGN OF NO BOUNTY HUNTER!
YES SIR, MISTER SLAUGHTER. I'LL STAY PUT. I PROMISE.

IT'S A TRAP. BILGE SAID TO MEET THE SEA-PLANE AT FOUR O'CLOCK--AN HOUR *LATER* THAN THE ARRANGED TIME.
THAT WAS OUR SIGNAL -- IT MEANS THE BOUNTY HUNTER HAS HIM.
ANGST UND UNHEIL! WHAT--WHAT CAN WE DO?

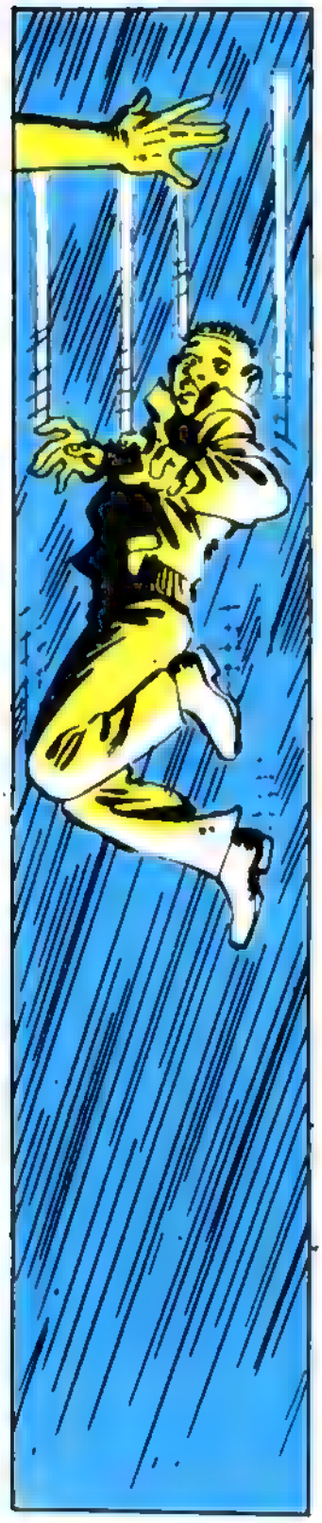
WE MEET THE SEAPLANE. OUR BOUNTY HUNTER HAS BEEN KIND ENOUGH TO PROVIDE US WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO ELIMINATE HIM.
HMMM... MICKEY, I'VE RUN OUT OF CIGARS. FETCH ME SOME.

SHORTLY...
VILLAGE CIGARS
CIGARS
PIPES CIGARS
CIGARETTES
"MICKEY, I'VE RUN OUT OF CIGARS. FETCH ME SOME."
CRIMENY, I'M A QUALIFIED HIT MAN! GOT FOUR KILLS TO MY CREDIT! AND WHAT DOES SLAUGHTER HAVE ME DO?...

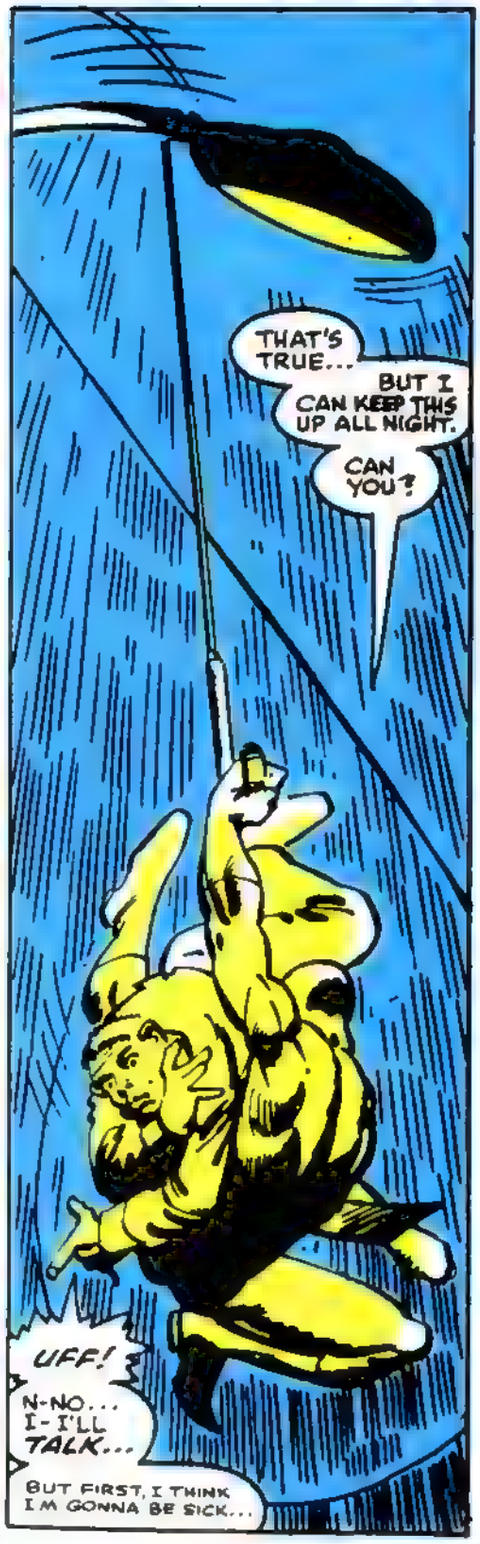

PAYDIRT. AND I ONLY HAD TO WAIT AN HOUR.
GOOD OLD HYPER-SENSES. LAST TIME I LOCKED HORNS WITH SLAUGHTER, I SMELLED - AND IDENTIFIED - THE PECULIAR BRAND OF CIGAR HE SMOKES!
...ANSWER THE PHONE! FETCH CIGARS! I DON'T NEED THIS...
IT WASN'T VERY DIFFICULT TO FIND THE ONLY PLACE IN TOWN THAT STOCKS THAT BRAND.
I COULD FOLLOW MICKEY BACK TO SLAUGHTER, BUT THAT WOULDN'T HELP ME FIND ELEKTRA.
SO...

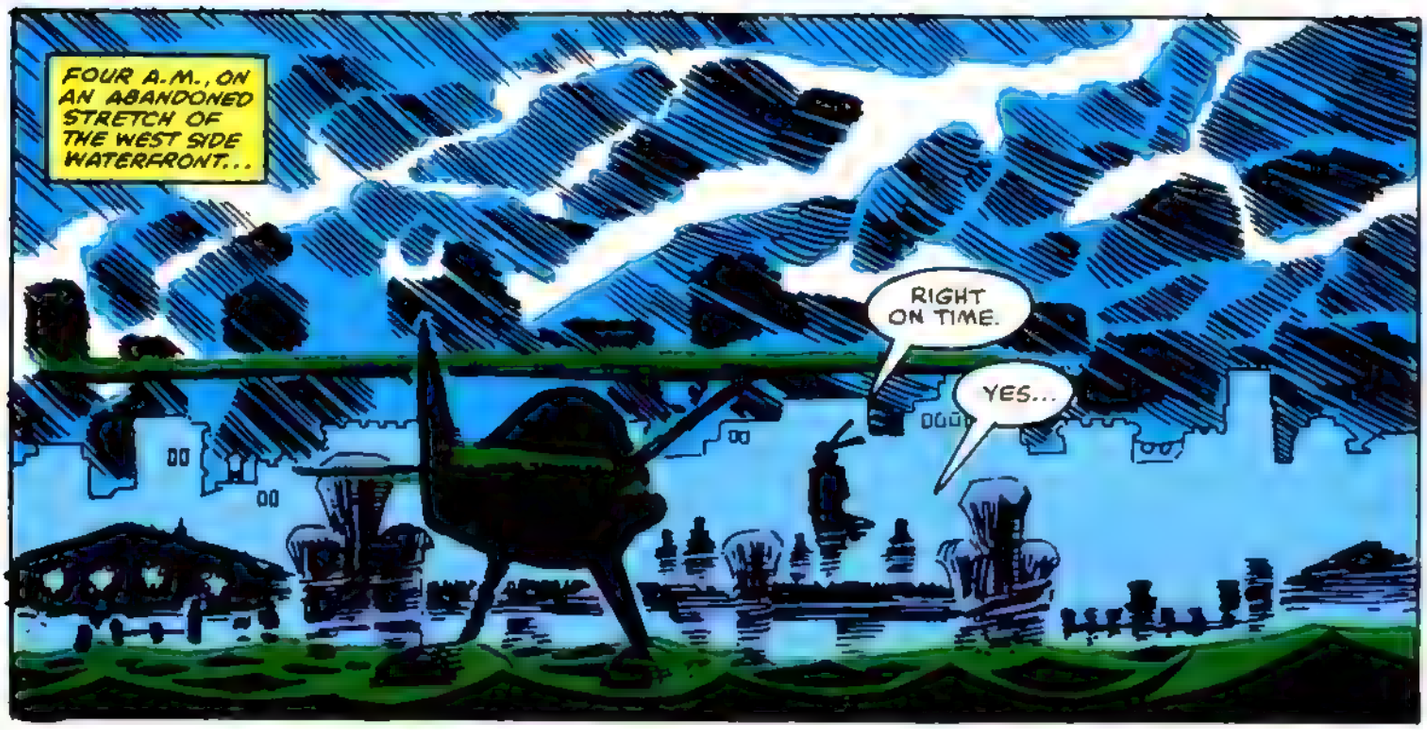

EVENING, MICKEY!
GAAAA!
STILL WASHING THE OLD MAN'S SOCKS?

I HAVEN'T THE TIME TO PLAY CAT-AND-MOUSE, MICKEY.
TELL ME HOW WALLENQUIST IS GETTING OUT OF TOWN, OR I'LL DROP YOU.
IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN, RAT. GET SMART.
I--I AIN'T AFRAID OF YOU, DEVIL!
YOU GOT A REP--EVERYBODY KNOWS YOU AIN'T NEVER KILLED NOBODY!



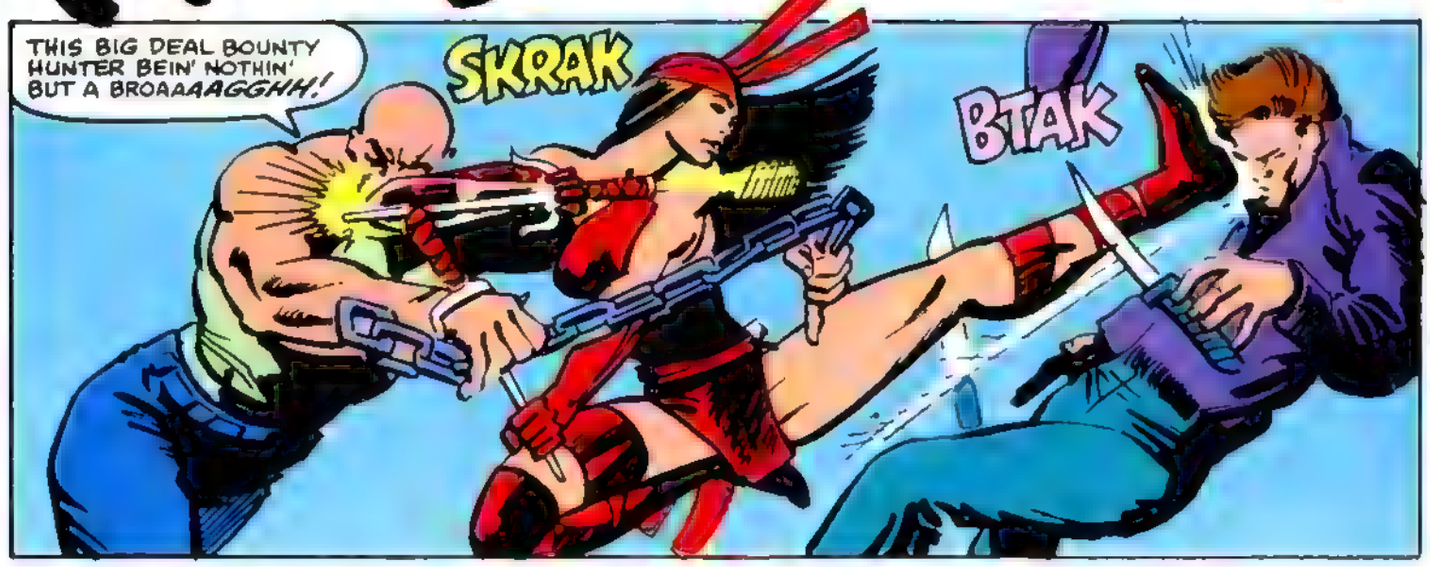
KOOK

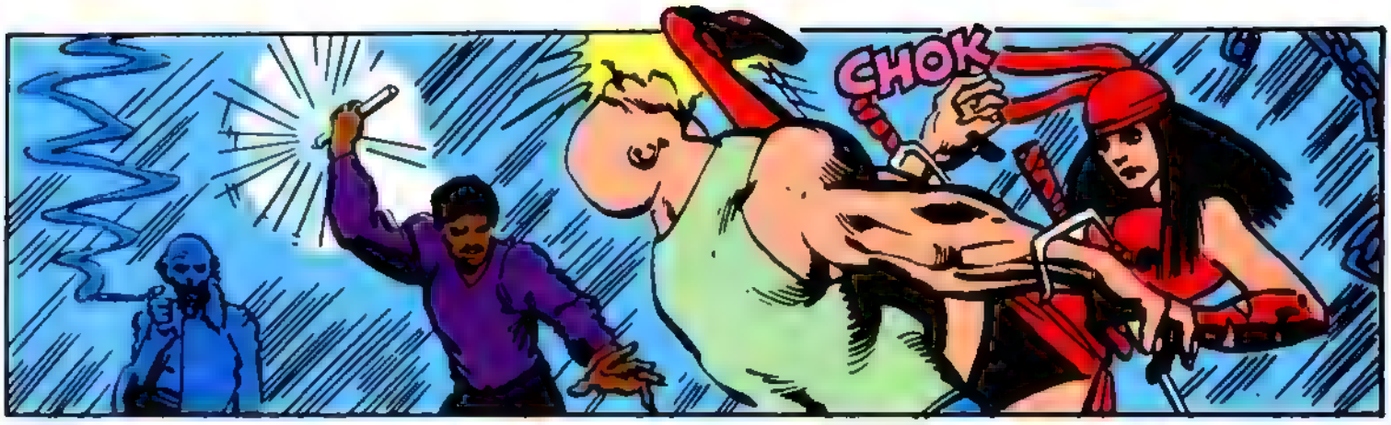

THAT'S TRUE...
BUT I CAN KEEP THIS UP ALL NIGHT.
CAN YOU?
UFF!
N-NO... I-I'LL TALK...
BUT FIRST, I THINK I'M GONNA BE SICK...

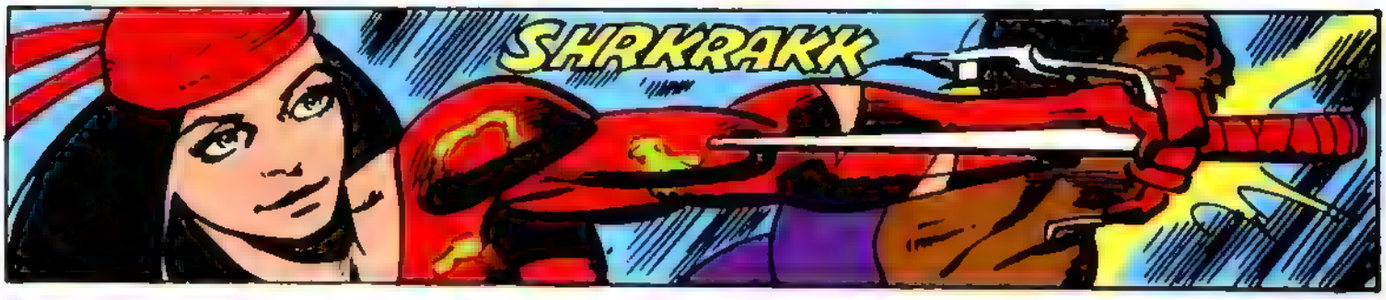

FOUR A.M., ON AN ABANDONED STRETCH OF THE WEST SIDE WATERFRONT...
RIGHT ON TIME.
YES...

...BUT FOR YOU, MY DEAR, IT IS FAR TOO LATE.
TAKE HER!
SHE--SHE'S JUST A BROAD, MISTER SLAUGHTER!
YOU HEARD THE BOSS, GROTTO.
LET'S DO IT.

OKAY, OKAY...
BUT IT SURE IS SCREWY.


THIS BIG DEAL BOUNTY HUNTER BEIN' NOTHIN' BUT A BROAAAAGGHH!
SKRAK
BTAK





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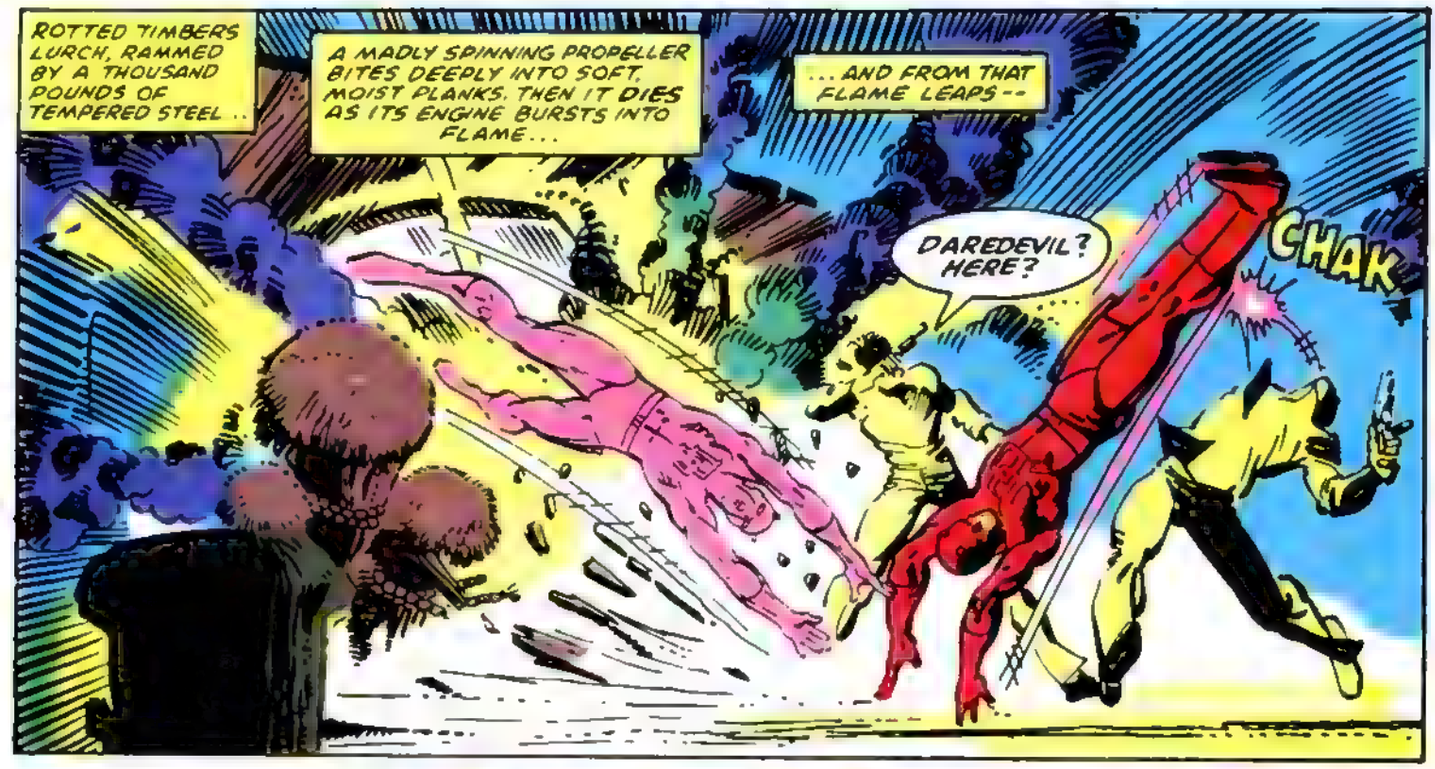
THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO DIE. THAT WOULD BE A WASTE OF MY AMMUNITION-- AND OF YOUR REMARKABLE TALENTS.
COME TO WORK FOR ME. MY BUSINESS COULD MAKE GOOD USE OF YOU.
I SERVE NO CAUSE-- NO LAW-- AND NO MAN.

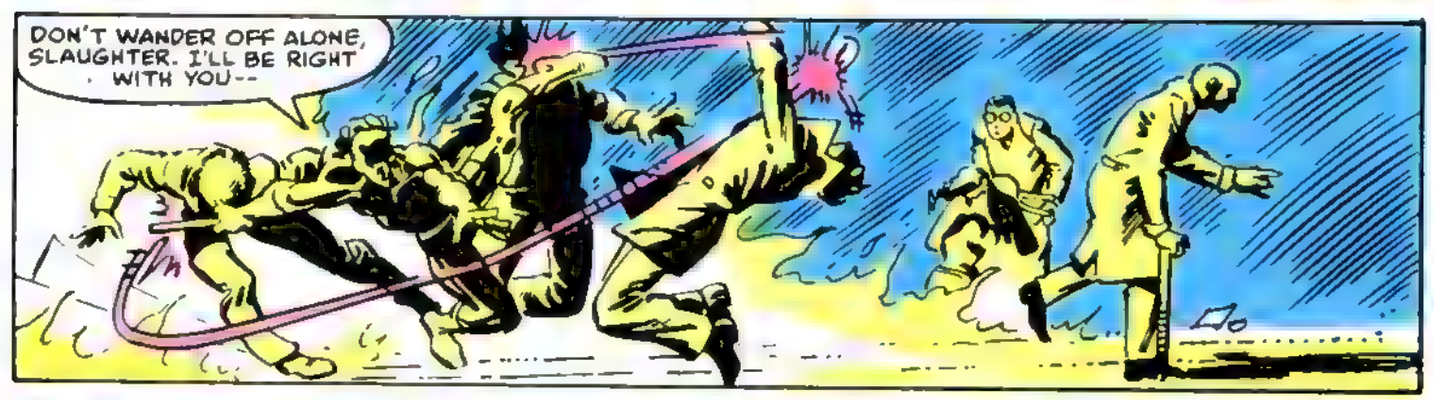
VERY WELL THEN. CHARLES?
UHHNNH!
A DART!
THUNK
A TRANQUILIZER DART. IT WILL KNOCK YOU OUT, BUT IT WON'T KILL YOU.

WE WILL.
TIE HER UP, AND FIND SOMETHING TO WEIGH HER DOWN. THEN THROW HER INTO THE RIVER.
HMMM... IN THE OLD DAYS WE WOULD'VE TAKEN THE CARE TO MAKE HER A PAIR OF CEMENT OVERSHOES.
WE HAD SO MUCH MORE STYLE IN THE OLD DAYS...

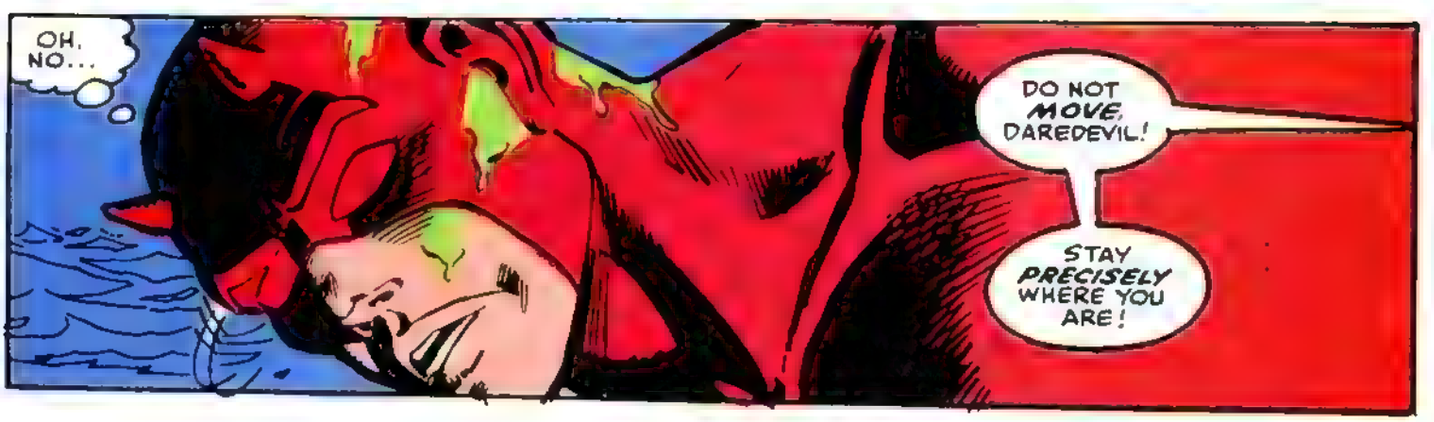
EH?
HEADLIGHTS GLARE. A ROTARY ENGINE COUGHS, THEN ROARS.

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
LIKE AN ANGRY BIRD OF PREY, THE SEAPLANE THAT WAS TO TAKE ALARICH WALLENQUIST TO FREEDOM INSTEAD CHARGES THE AGED PIER!


ROTTED TIMBERS LURCH, RAMMED BY A THOUSAND POUNDS OF TEMPERED STEEL ..
A MADLY SPINNING PROPELLER BITES DEEPLY INTO SOFT, MOIST PLANKS. THEN IT DIES AS ITS ENGINE BURSTS INTO FLAME...
... AND FROM THAT FLAME LEAPS--
DAREDEVIL? HERE?
CHAK


DON'T WANDER OFF ALONE, SLAUGHTER. I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU--

OOF!
--JUST AS SOON AS I THROW OUT THE GARBAGE!


OH, NO...
DO NOT MOVE, DAREDEVIL!
STAY PRECISELY WHERE YOU ARE!

LISTEN CLOSELY. IF YOU FAIL TO DO AS I INSTRUCT, I WILL SHOOT THE *FRAULEIN* IN THE HEAD AND MAKE HER DIE!

VERSTENEN SIE?

YES, I UNDERSTAND PLEASE... WHATEVER YOU SAY...

SEHR GUT! NOW TURN YOUR BACK-- AND SLOWLY WALK AWAY...

ANY SECOND NOW...

...HE'LL POINT THE GUN AT ME.

HE'S PLAYING IT SAFE. HE'S GOING TO SHOOT ME IN THE BACK, THEN KILL ELEKTRA.

HIS HEARTBEAT WILL JUMP JUST BEFORE HE FIRES. THAT'S WHEN I MAKE MY MOVE...

...WHATEVER *THAT* IS!

THINK, MURDOCK! THERE HAS TO BE A WAY OUT.

THERE ALWAYS IS.

EH? WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

IT'S ELEKTRA--

--SHE'S COMING AROUND!

THIS IS IT. OUR ONLY CHANCE...

UHH...

I'LL HAVE TO COUNT ON HER SKILL, AS WELL AS MY OWN.

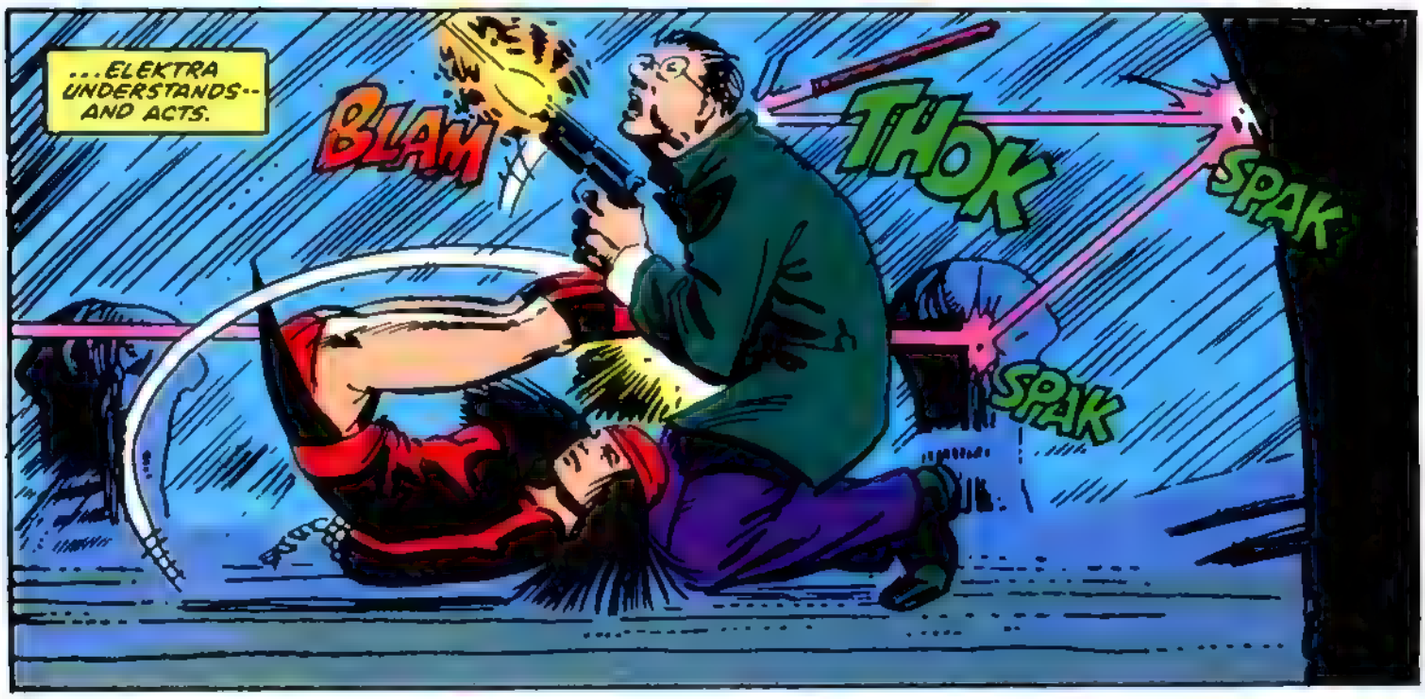
HER SKILL-- AND HER *MEMORY*...

HIS HEARTBEAT JUMPED!

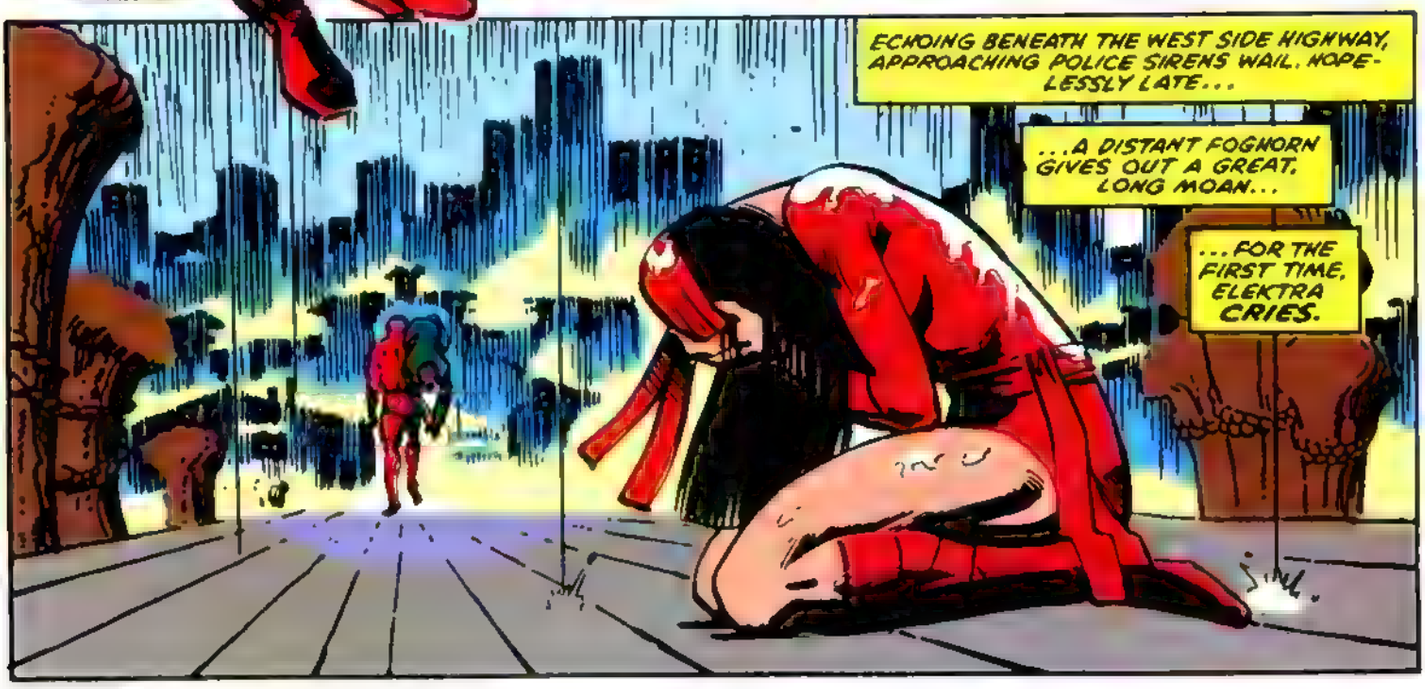
HE'S ABOUT TO *FIRE*...

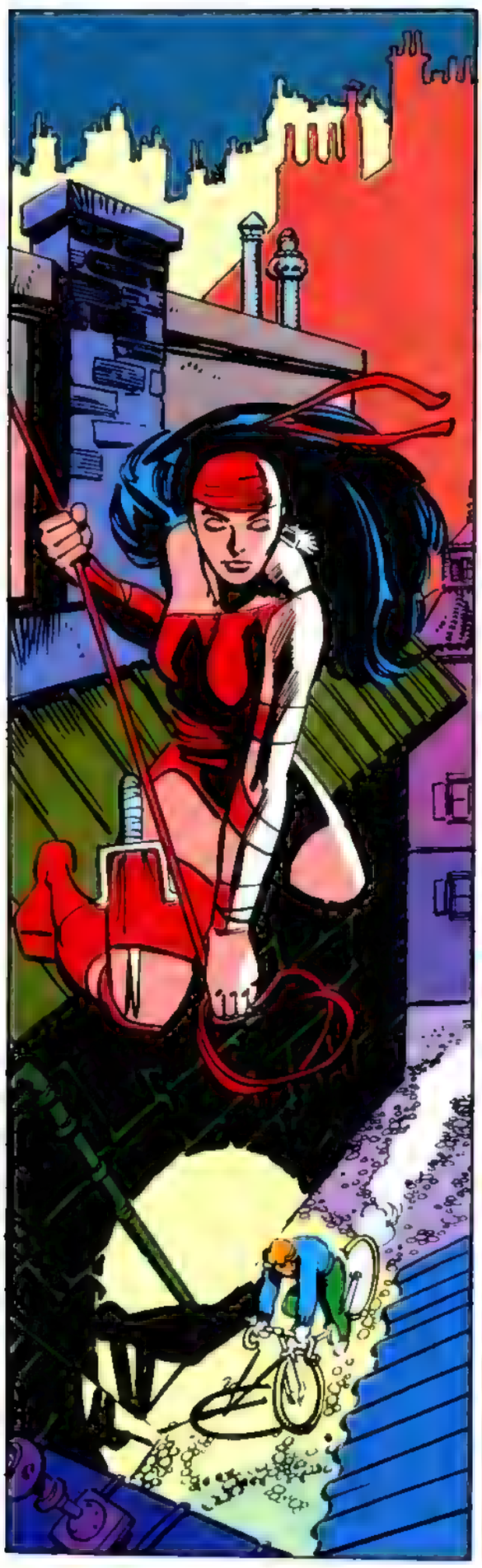
HIT 'EM LOW. OLIVE OIL!

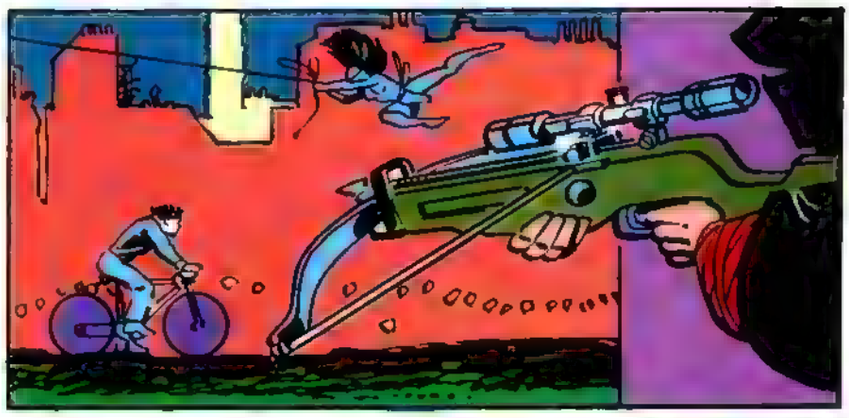
THE WORDS ARE THE SAME. AND THOUGH THEY DO NOT COME FROM THE TURTLE-NECKED TWENTY-YEAR OLD WHO SCREAMED THEM, YEARS AGO...

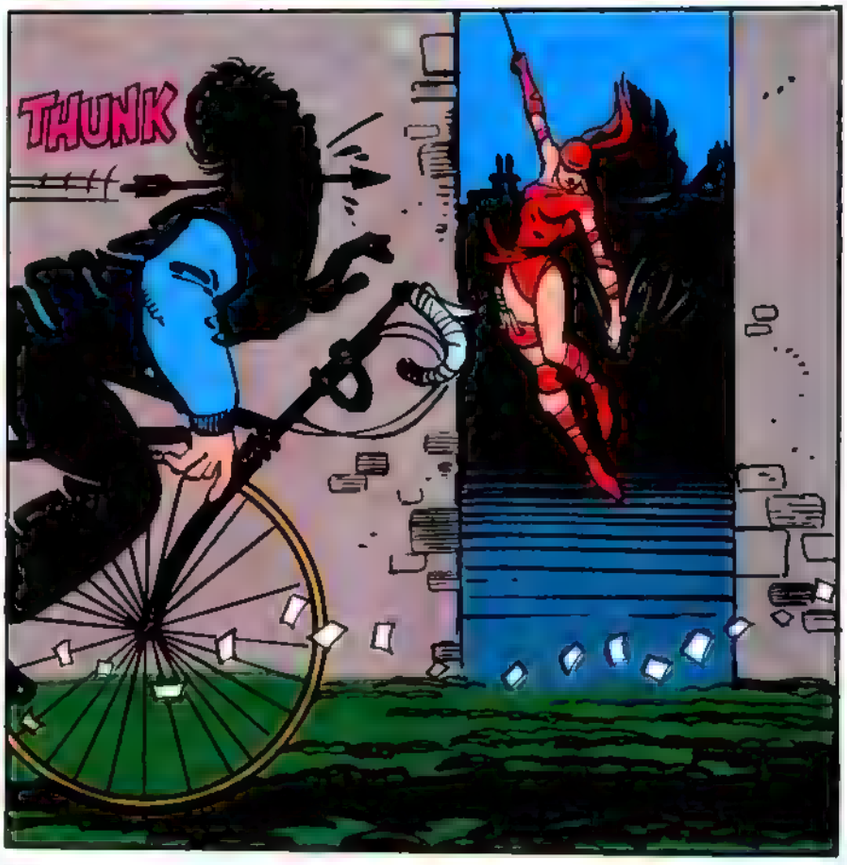

...ELEKTRA UNDERSTANDS--AND ACTS.
BLAM
THOK
SPAK
SPAK

MATT...
MATT, IT IS YOU...

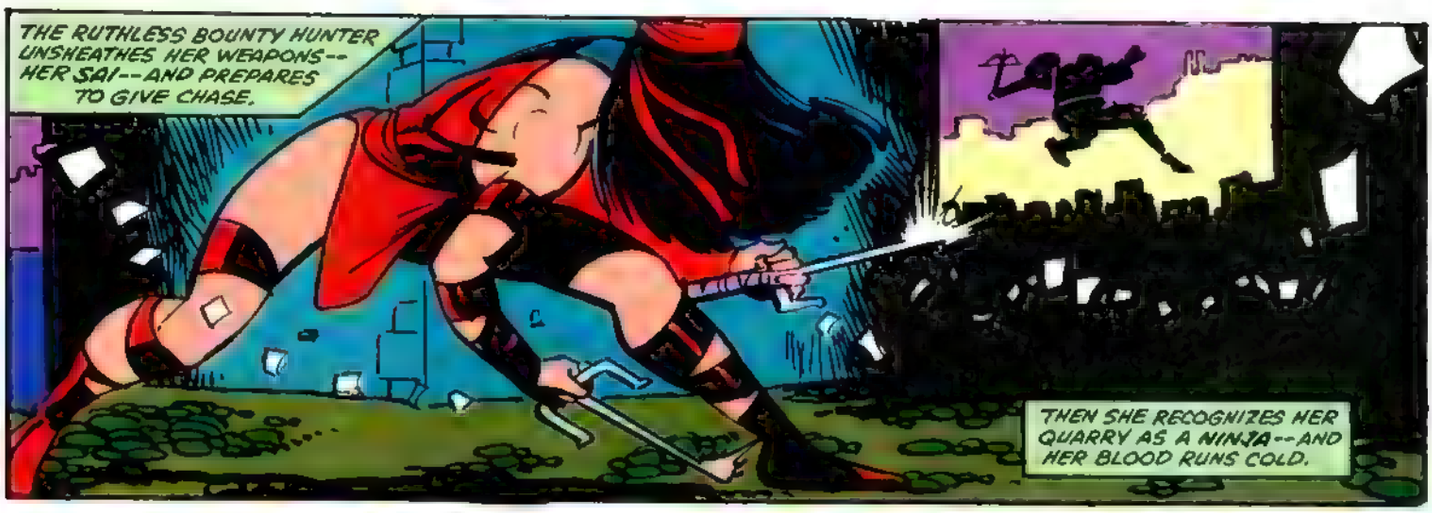

ECHOING BENEATH THE WEST SIDE HIGHWAY, APPROACHING POLICE SIRENS WAIL. HOPELESSLY LATE...
...A DISTANT FOGHORN GIVES OUT A GREAT, LONG MOAN...
...FOR THE FIRST TIME, ELEKTRA CRIES.



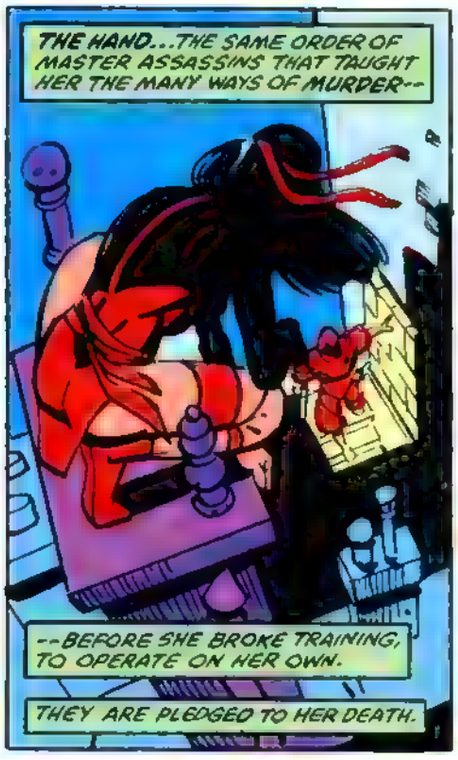



THUNK

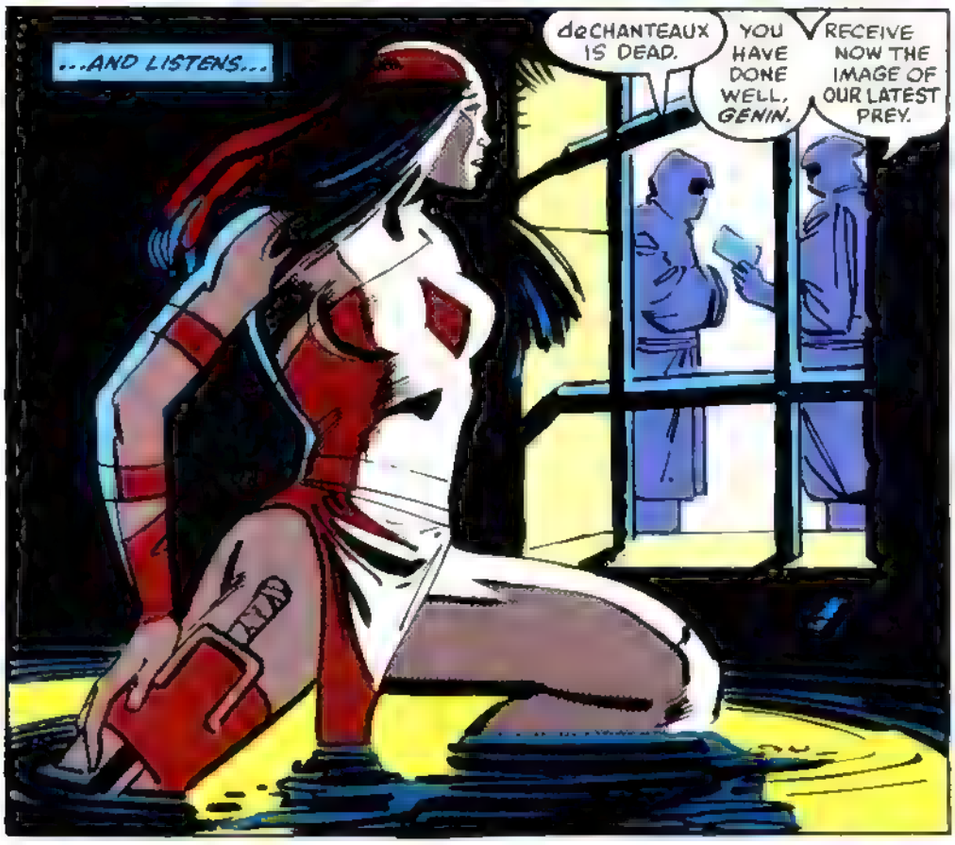
ALIVE, ALPHONSE deCHANTEAUX WAS WORTH A FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLAR BOUNTY.
WHOEVER KILLED HIM MUST NOW FACE ELEKTRA.


THE RUTHLESS BOUNTY HUNTER UNSHEATHES HER WEAPONS-- HER SAI--AND PREPARES TO GIVE CHASE.
THEN SHE RECOGNIZES HER QUARRY AS A NINJA--AND HER BLOOD RUNS COLD.

A CLOSER LOOK CONFIRMS HER SUSPICION. HE IS ONE OF THE HAND.


THE HAND...THE SAME ORDER OF MASTER ASSASSINS THAT TAUGHT HER THE MANY WAYS OF MURDER--
--BEFORE SHE BROKE TRAINING, TO OPERATE ON HER OWN.
THEY ARE PLEDGED TO HER DEATH.

BUT WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE, IN PARIS, THOUSANDS OF MILES FROM THEIR TERRITORY?
SHE SHOULD NOT WONDER. SHE SHOULD TURN AND RUN. SHE SHOULD FLEE THIS CITY, AND NEVER RETURN.
YET, SHE FOLLOWS...


...AND LISTENS...
deCHANTEAUX IS DEAD.
YOU HAVE DONE WELL, GENIN.
RECEIVE NOW THE IMAGE OF OUR LATEST PREY.

HE IS AN AMERICAN.
A LAWYER...

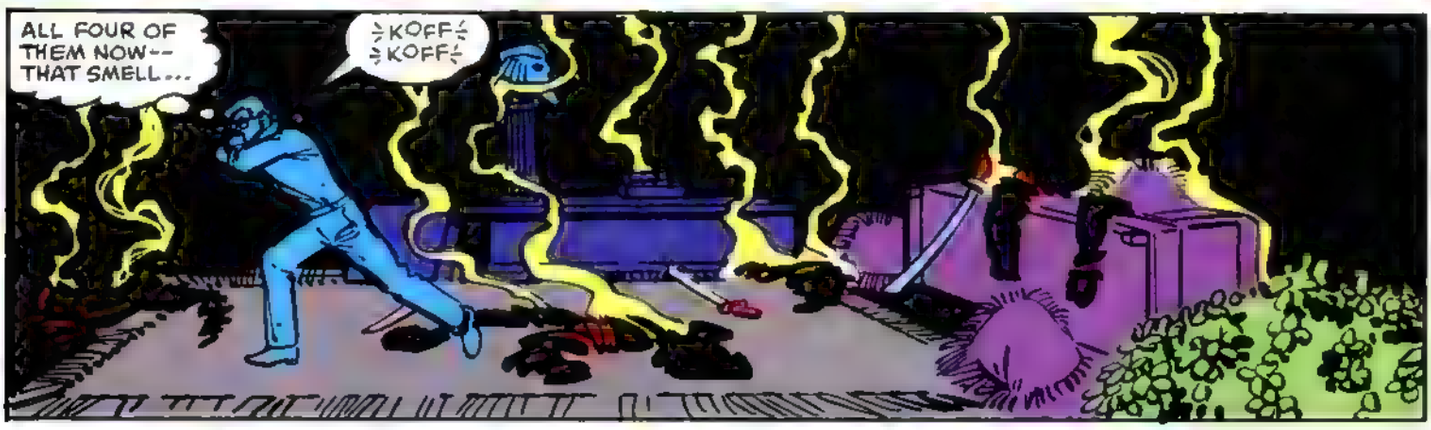
...NAMED MATTHEW MURDOCK.
HE AND HIS CLIENT, WHOSE IMAGE AWAITS US IN NEW YORK...
BOTH MUST DIE.
MATT!
IT IS MATT.
THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT. THE HAND HAS EXPANDED ITS OPERATION TO EUROPE AND AMERICA--
--AND HAVE BEEN HIRED TO SLAY THE ONLY MAN SHE HAS EVER LOVED.
HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN, SINCE HER FATHER'S DEATH DROVE HER FROM MATT-- TO BECOME A MERCENARY, A BOUNTY HUNTER, AN ASSASSIN?
HOW MANY YEARS, SINCE HIS OWN FATHER'S DEATH INSPIRED MATT TO BECOME DAREDEVIL?
THEY ARE ENEMIES NOW.
SHE HATES HIM. SHE DOES.
AND SHE WILL NOT IMPERIL HER OWN LIFE, TO SAVE HIS.
SHE WILL NOT.
AND YET, SHE FINDS HERSELF ON THE NEXT FLIGHT TO NEW YORK.

TEN HOURS AGO, HER PLANE SET DOWN AT NEW YORK'S LAGUARDIA AIRPORT.
TEN SECONDS AGO, THIS MAN THOUGHT HE WAS SAFE, IN HIS MANHATTAN BROWNSTONE.
HE IS AWARE OF US. HOW?
IT DOES NOT MATTER
HE IS A DEAD MAN.
HE IS MATT MURDOCK-- DAREDEVIL. WHEN HE WAS A BOY, HE WAS BLINDED BY A RADIOACTIVE ISOTOPE THAT MUTATED HIS NERVE CENTERS, EXPANDING THE RANGE OF HIS REMAINING SENSES BEYOND BELIEF.
IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, HE'S BEEN FIGHTING EVER SINCE.
THKK
WHOK
KLUGG
NEED MY BILLY CLUB.
KANGG
CHUD
THWAKK

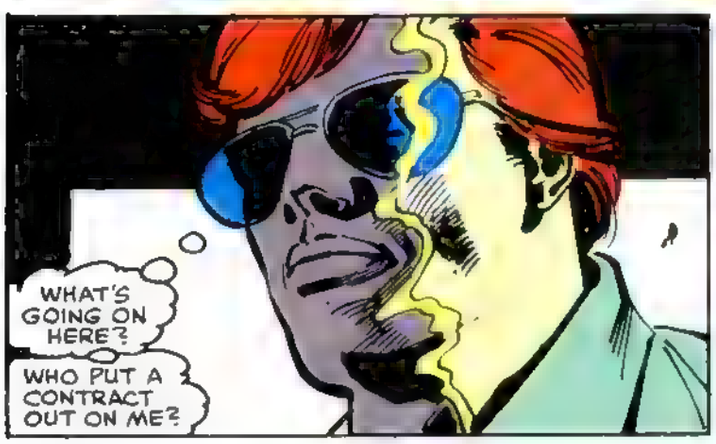
FOUR OF US-- DOWNED IN SECONDS!
IT IS LUDICROUS.
LIFE IS FULL OF SURPRISES.
WHY THE ATTACK?

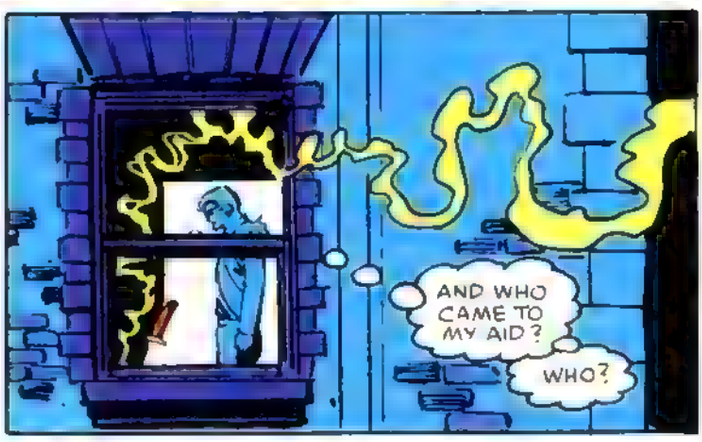
YOU WILL LEARN NOTHING, MURDOCK.
WHEN ONE OF THE HAND HAS FALLEN--
--HE IS NO MORE.

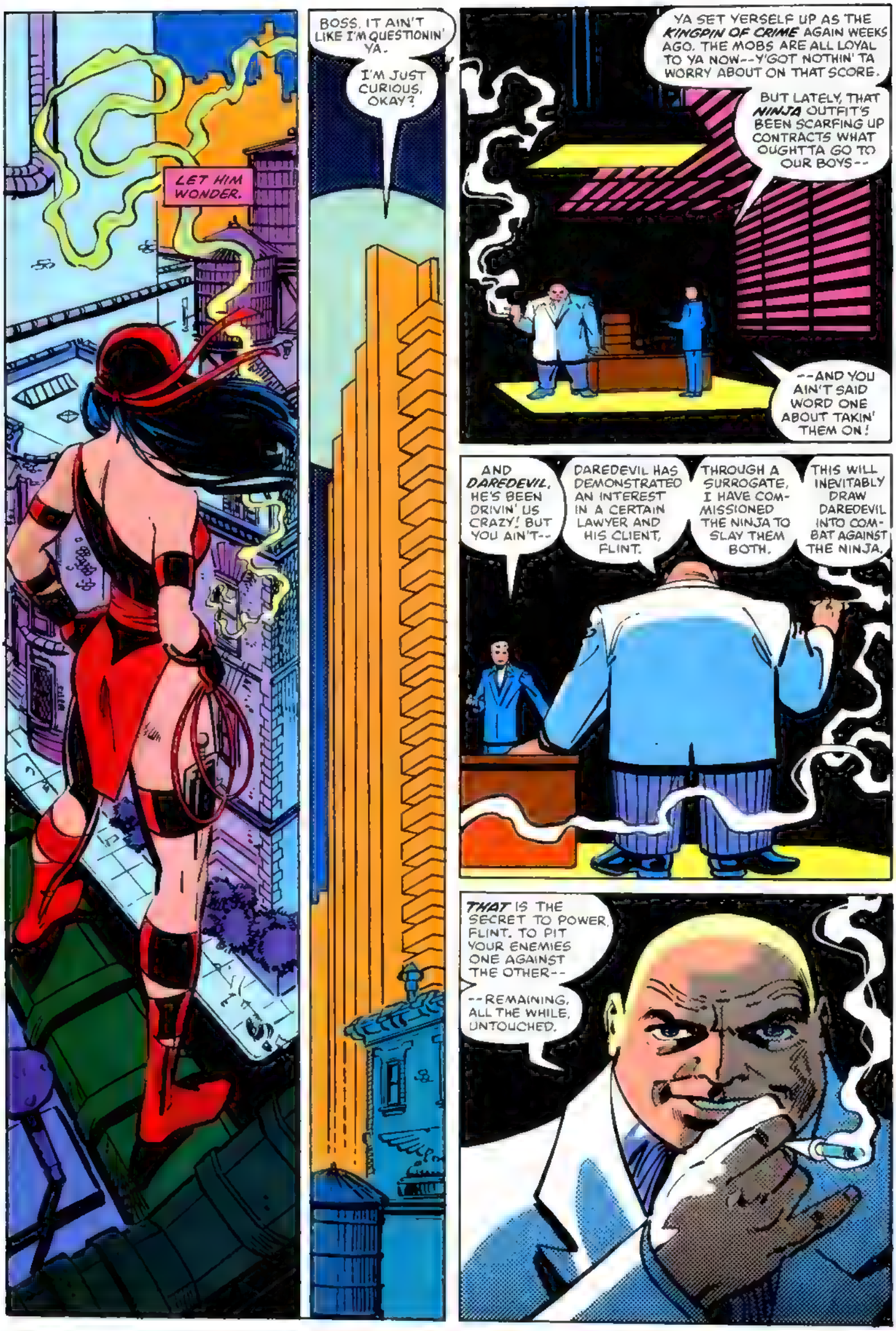
HE--HE'S DISSOLVING--!


ALL FOUR OF THEM NOW-- THAT SMELL...
KOFF KOFF

WH... ANOTHER ONE, IN THIS ROOM!
HE MUST'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ME, WITH THAT CROSSBOW.
BUT SOMEONE GOT TO HIM FIRST.


WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WHO PUT A CONTRACT OUT ON ME?


AND WHO CAME TO MY AID?
WHO?


LET HIM WONDER.
BOSS, IT AIN'T LIKE I'M QUESTIONIN' YA.
I'M JUST CURIOUS, OKAY?
YA SET YERSELF UP AS THE KINGPIN OF CRIME AGAIN WEEKS AGO. THE MOBS ARE ALL LOYAL TO YA NOW--Y'GOT NOTHIN' TA WORRY ABOUT ON THAT SCORE.
BUT LATELY, THAT NINJA OUTFIT'S BEEN SCARFING UP CONTRACTS WHAT OUGHTTA GO TO OUR BOYS--
--AND YOU AIN'T SAID WORD ONE ABOUT TAKIN' THEM ON!
AND DAREDEVIL, HE'S BEEN DRIVIN' US CRAZY! BUT YOU AIN'T--
DAREDEVIL HAS DEMONSTRATED AN INTEREST IN A CERTAIN LAWYER AND HIS CLIENT, FLINT.
THROUGH A SURROGATE, I HAVE COMMISSIONED THE NINJA TO SLAY THEM BOTH.
THIS WILL INEVITABLY DRAW DAREDEVIL INTO COMBAT AGAINST THE NINJA.
THAT IS THE SECRET TO POWER, FLINT. TO PIT YOUR ENEMIES ONE AGAINST THE OTHER--
--REMAINING, ALL THE WHILE, UNTOUCHED.

MORNING AND ATTORNEY MATT MURDOCK GOES TO WORK.
AS DO OTHERS...
WHAT THE...
YOU!
CHUDD
AHHGHH!!

NO!
NO...
SSSSSSSS
WHOOM
MATT?
MATT--!
MATT!

FOR A TIME, HE FLOATS IN A VOID THAT IS AS DARK AND AS SILENT AS DEATH.

THEN, HE FEELS STARCHED COTTON FIBER RUSTLE LIGHTLY AGAINST HIS LEGS...

...HE SMELLS THE SHARP, AMMONIA-LADEN ANTISEPTIC OF A HOSPITAL, ODDLY MIXED WITH A DELICATE PERFUME...

...HE HEARS A VOICE, SOFT AND MELODIC:

YOU HAD US WORRIED, LOVER.

HE WAKES. BUT THE DARKNESS NEVER LEAVES.

:UHHNN:

HEATHER...

DR. GLOSS SAYS YOU'LL BE OKAY, MATT. ME, I'M NOT SO SURE.

I MEAN, IT'S A TURN-ON, HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH DAREDEVIL. IT REALLY IS.

BUT DON'T YOU EVER STOP?

TOSSED THROUGH WINDOWS... SHOT... STABBED... HIT BY BOMBS...

THERE'S GOT TO BE A BETTER WAY TO SPEND YOUR EVENINGS!

IN FACT, I'VE GOT A FEW SUGGESTIONS...

JUST A SECOND. THAT RADIO...

WHAT RADIO?

...TO AVOID ANOTHER SUCH ATTACK, POLICE ARE MOVING MELVIN POTTER TO ANOTHER FACILITY.

POTTER, ALSO KNOWN AS THE GLADIATOR, IS CHARGED WITH...

MATT-- WHAT--

THE NINJA-- THEY'RE AFTER MELVIN!

BUT IF HE'S MOVED, HE'LL BE MORE VULNERABLE THAN EVER! HE--

OOF!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, DARLING?

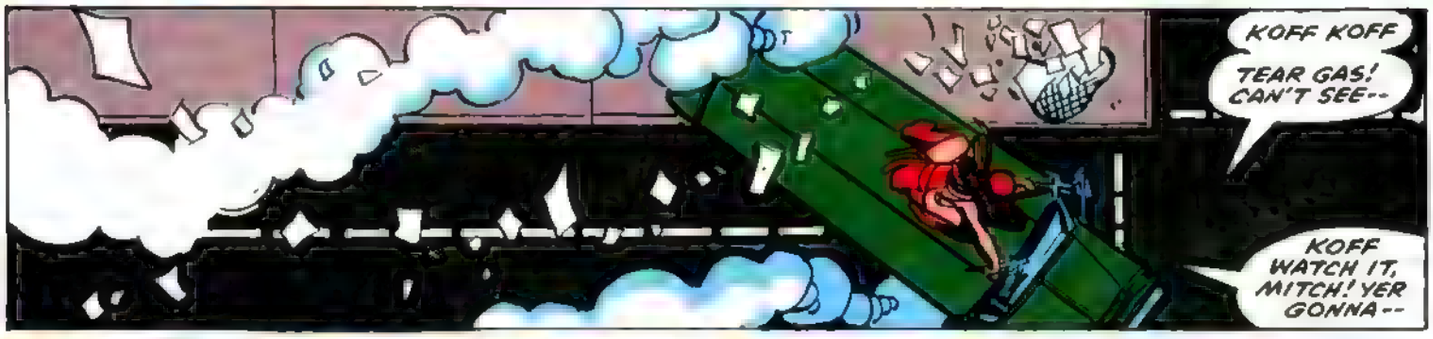
YOU NEVER FALL DOWN! YOUR RADAR--

MY RADAR--

--IT'S GONE!

MEANWHILE...
THAT POTTER GUY OUGHTTA BE GRATEFUL. HE'S IN THE BACK OF THE TRUCK--
--SO HE CAN'T SMELL YOUR STINKIN' CIGAR!
SHADDUP. I GOT RIGHTS.

BESIDES, I GOT THE WINDOW OPEN, DON'T I?
HEY!


KOFF KOFF
TEAR GAS! CAN'T SEE--
KOFF WATCH IT, MITCH! YER GONNA--

PIER 41
CRASH

IT IS YOUR GLADIATOR ARMOR.
THE SOONER YOU ARE WEARING IT, THE GREATER YOUR CHANCES OF SURVIVING.
OWW... MY HEAD...
WHA... WHO'RE YOU?
BUT I...
THERE IS NO TIME FOR DISCUSSION. TAKE THIS.

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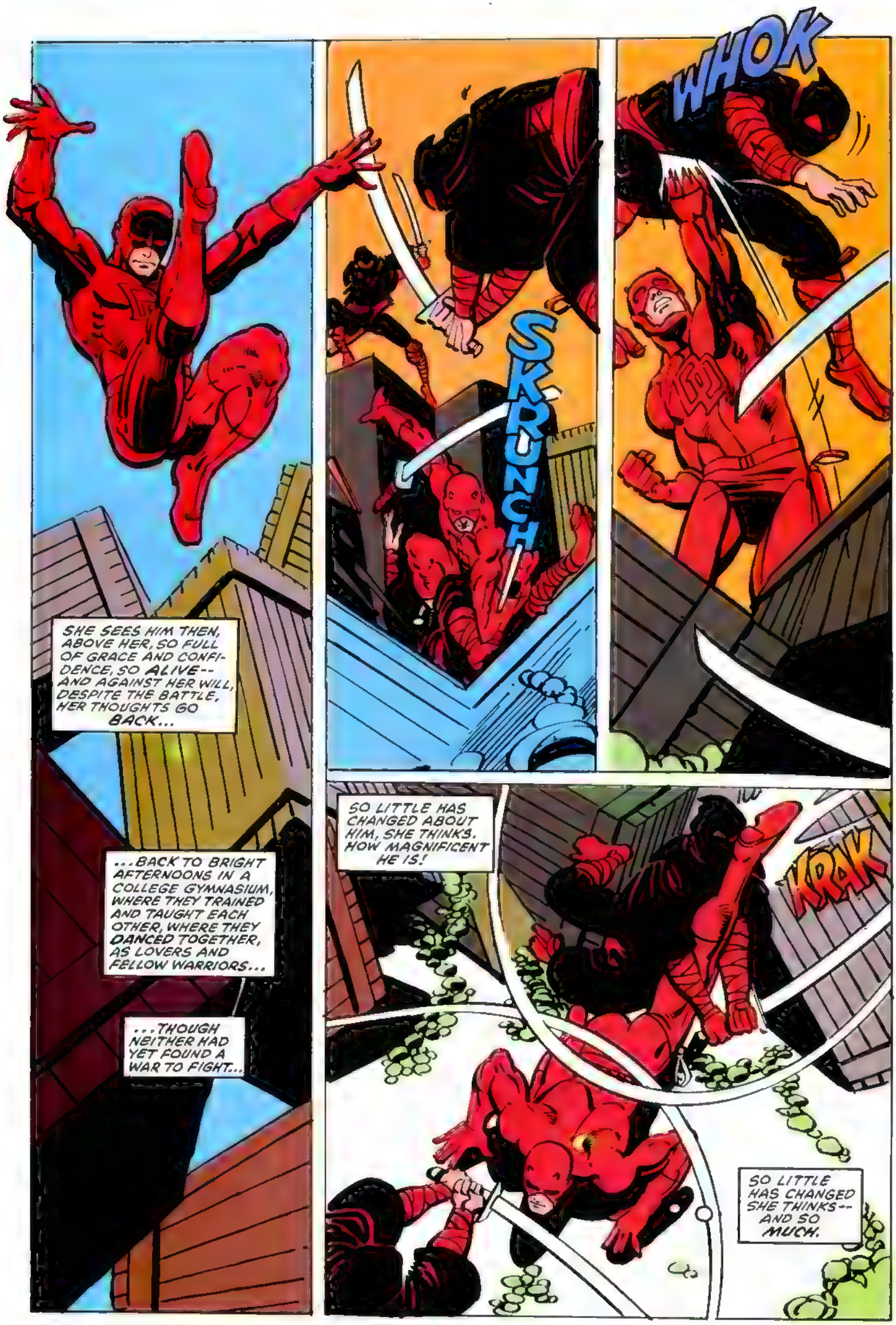
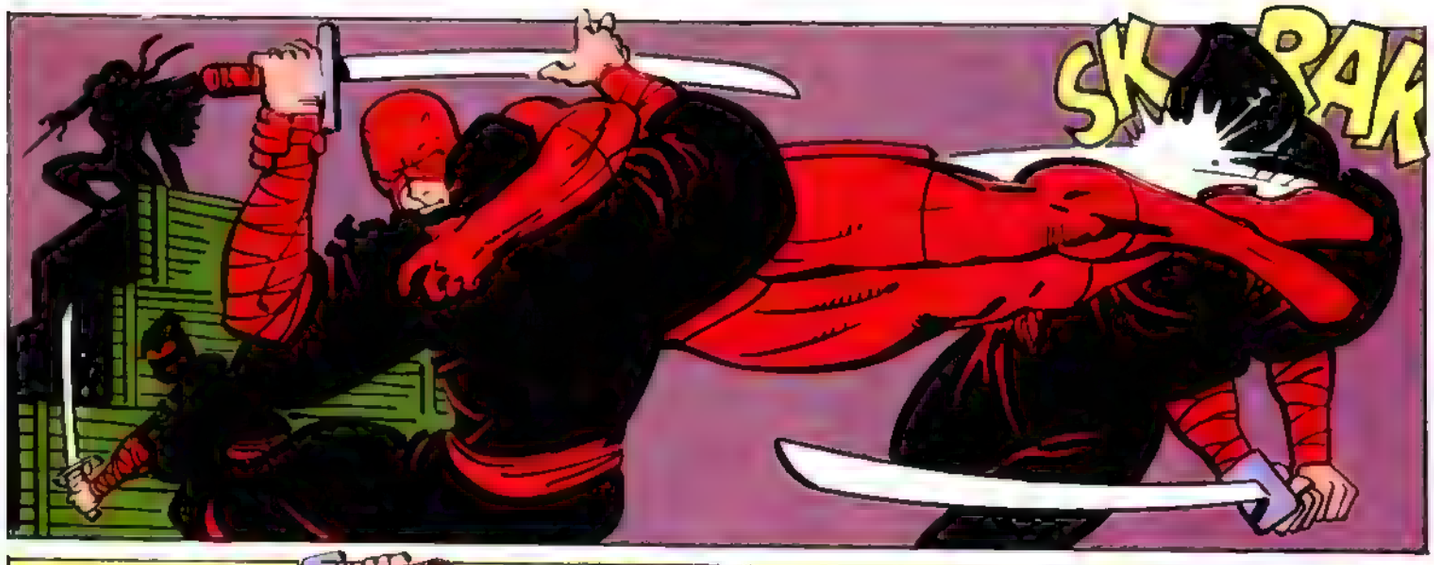
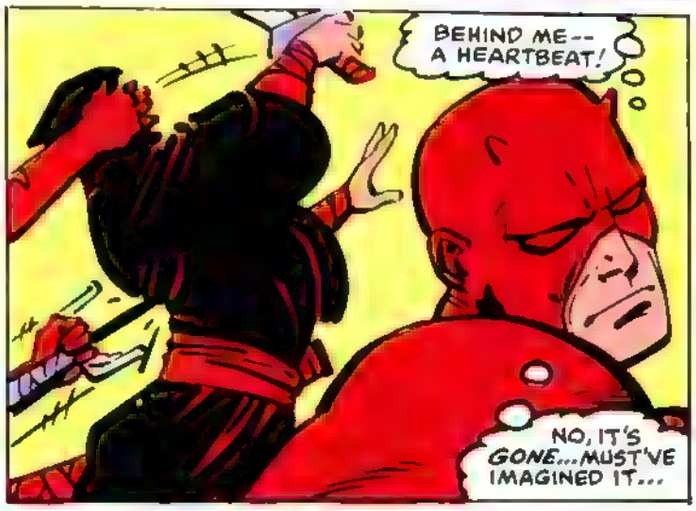
OUTSIDE...
PADDED FOOTSTEPS, DOZENS OF THEM. THEY MUST BE SWARMING THE PLACE!
I SHOULDN'T HAVE COME. WITHOUT MY RADAR, I HAVEN'T MUCH OF A CHANCE AGAINST THAT MANY OF THEM.
BUT MELVIN DOESN'T HAVE ANY CHANCE, WITHOUT MY HELP.
HE'S FINALLY PURGED HIMSELF OF THE GLADIATOR-- FINALLY DESTROYED HIS KILLER INSTINCTS--
-- JUST WHEN HE NEEDS THEM MOST!
COVER MY BACK, POTTER. I CANNOT DEFEAT THEM ALONE.
POTTER?
KTANG
WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?
FIGHT BACK!
SKRAK
KUNNG
KTANNG
I-- I CAN'T!
CHOK
I'VE LOST IT! I--
AARRGHH!!
SHIRRRK
AS YOU SAID, WOMAN, YOU CANNOT DEFEAT US ALONE.
EH? THOSE CRATES--

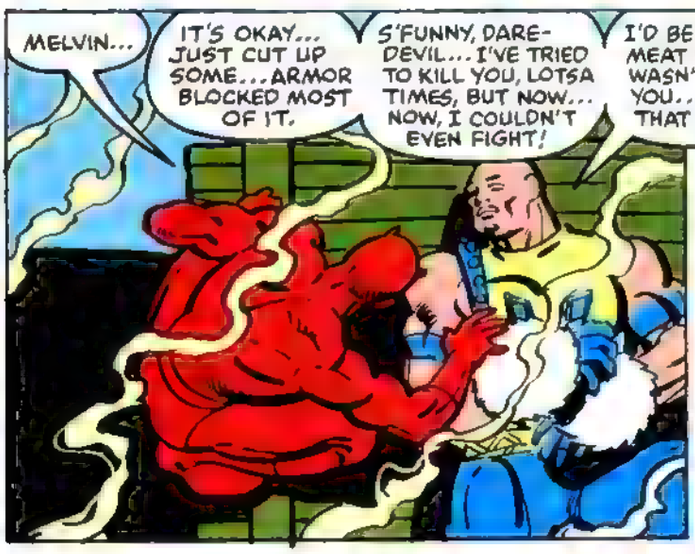

SHE SEES HIM THEN, ABOVE HER, SO FULL OF GRACE AND CONFIDENCE, SO ALIVE-- AND AGAINST HER WILL, DESPITE THE BATTLE, HER THOUGHTS GO BACK...
...BACK TO BRIGHT AFTERNOONS IN A COLLEGE GYMNASIUM, WHERE THEY TRAINED AND TAUGHT EACH OTHER, WHERE THEY DANCED TOGETHER, AS LOVERS AND FELLOW WARRIORS...
...THOUGH NEITHER HAD YET FOUND A WAR TO FIGHT...
SKRUNCH
WHOK
SO LITTLE HAS CHANGED ABOUT HIM, SHE THINKS. HOW MAGNIFICENT HE IS!
KRAK
SO LITTLE HAS CHANGED SHE THINKS-- AND SO MUCH.


SK
PAK

WHAK
I'M DOING IT! I'M HOLDING MY OWN!


BEHIND ME-- A HEARTBEAT!
NO, IT'S GONE...MUST'VE IMAGINED IT...

THEY'RE LEAVING!
I DID IT. WITHOUT MY RADAR. ALONE...


MELVIN...
IT'S OKAY... JUST CUT UP SOME...ARMOR BLOCKED MOST OF IT.
S'FUNNY, DARE-DEVIL...I'VE TRIED TO KILL YOU, LOTSA TIMES, BUT NOW... NOW, I COULDN'T EVEN FIGHT!
I'D BE COLD MEAT IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU...AND THAT LADY...

LADY?
YEAH...THE ONE WITH THE SAI. DIDN'T YOU SEE HER?
NO.
NO, IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN HER.

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WHHSSHK
REMARKABLE.
THREE OF US...
...WITH BUT A SINGLE STROKE--!
AS ALWAYS, YOU DID NOT FAIL ME, MY FRIEND.
CONSIDER THAT BUT A SMALL APPETIZER...A PRELUDE...TO YOUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT.
RECEIVE NOW THE IMAGE...
...OF THE WOMAN ELEKTRA.

AN HOUR AGO, SHE WAS A PRISONER, BOUND TO A MAN, TO HIS CITY. SHACKLED BY A LOVE SHE HAD TRIED TO KILL.

NOW, SHE IS FREE. SHE IS BEYOND HER PAIN, HER NEED, BEYOND HER SELF.

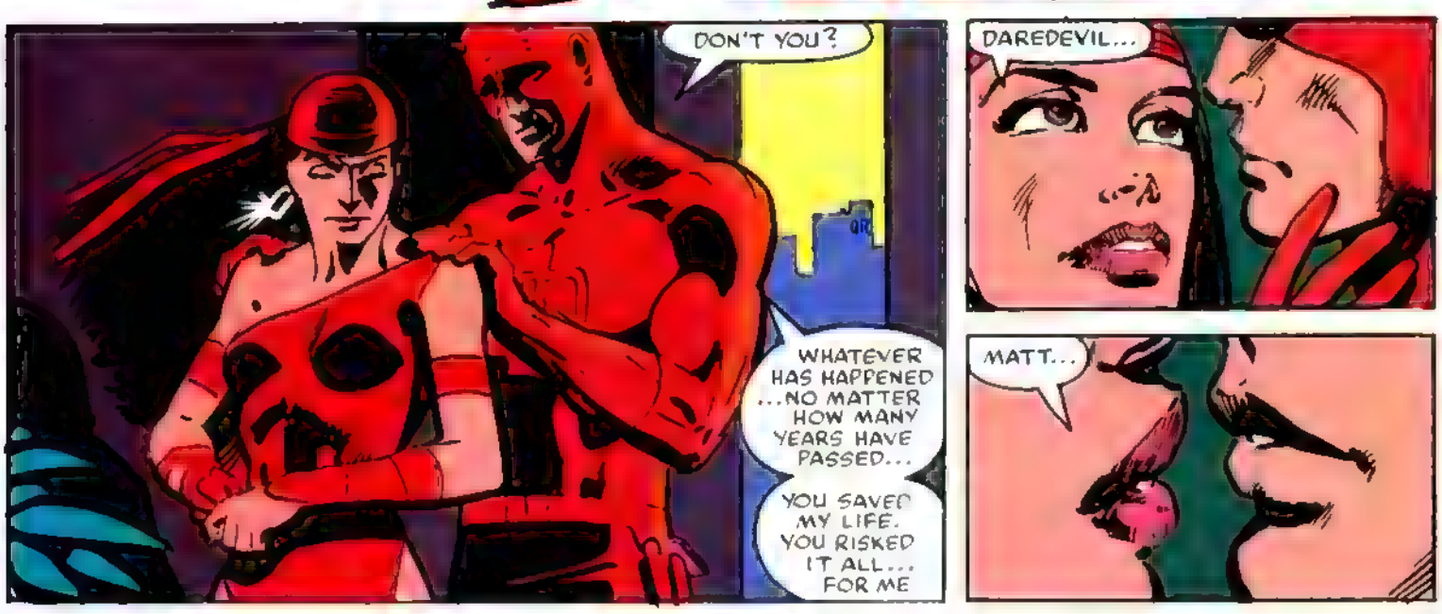
YET, EVEN AS SHE SWIMS DEEPLY IN MEDITATION, A PART OF HER REMAINS ALERT. SHE FEELS A BREEZE WHERE NONE SHOULD BE...HEARS A CURTAIN RUSTLE LIGHTLY, BRIEFLY.

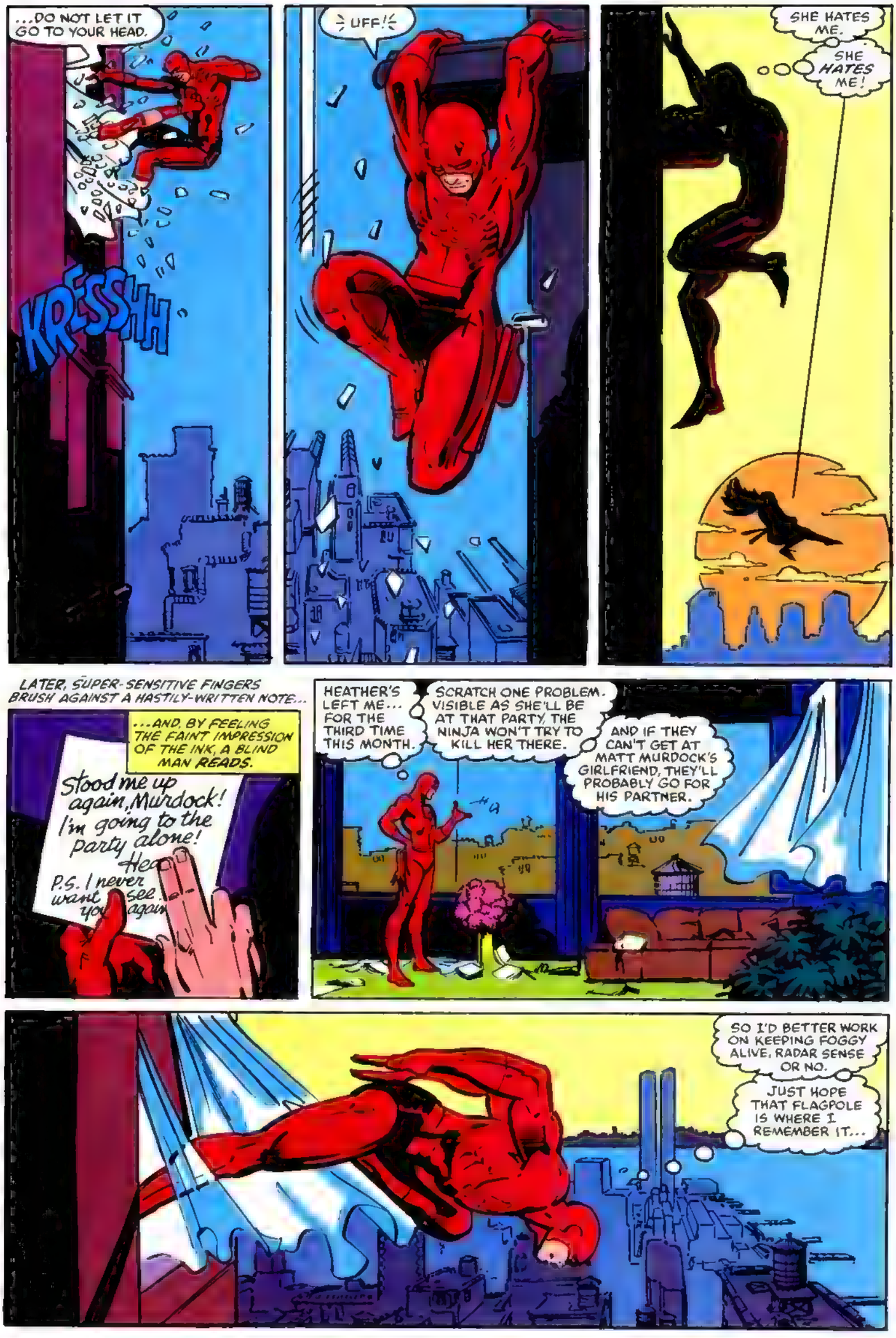
IN AN INSTANT, SHE IS READY. FOR SHE IS ELEKTRA--MERCENARY, BOUNTY HUNTER, ASSASSIN, MISTRESS OF THE DEADLY ART OF NINJUTSU.

SHE IS ELEKTRA--AND SHE IS NO MAN'S FOOL.

CONSIDER THAT A WARNING, DAREDEVIL. EVEN YOU CANNOT CATCH ME UNAWARE.
THUNK
I WASN'T TRYING TO.
CAN WE TALK?

LAST NIGHT, A NINJA GROUP ATTACKED MATT MURDOCK AND HIS CLIENT. YOU CAME TO OUR AID.
HAD THEY ATTACKED ME AS DAREDEVIL I WOULD'VE UNDERSTOOD. BUT WHO'D WANT TO KILL MY ALTER-EGO?
LAWYERS MAKE ENEMIES.
HOW DID YOU FIND ME?
WASN'T DIFFICULT. I JUST CHECKED THE MOST EXPENSIVE HOTELS IN TOWN.
YOUR TASTES HAVEN'T CHANGED SINCE COLLEGE... NO MATTER HOW MUCH ELSE HAS.
IN COLLEGE WE WERE LOVERS. NOW, WE ARE ENEMIES. IT IS THAT SIMPLE.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
ELEKTRA, YOU KNOW HOW THE RADIATION THAT BLINDED ME IN MY YOUTH ALSO AMPLIFIED MY REMAINING SENSES, AND I'VE DEPENDED ON THOSE SENSES EVER SINCE.
BUT MOSTLY, I'VE DEPENDED ON MY BUILT-IN RADAR. IT'S BEEN MY CLOSEST EQUIVALENT TO SIGHT.
IT'S GONE, ELEKTRA!
THAT BOMB THAT HIT ME YESTERDAY TOOK IT AWAY. I HOPED IT WOULD COME BACK-- BUT IT HASN'T.
YOU MUST BE DESPERATE.
IT IS FORTUNATE FOR ME THAT I DO NOT CARE.


DON'T YOU?
WHATEVER HAS HAPPENED ...NO MATTER HOW MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED...
YOU SAVED MY LIFE. YOU RISKED IT ALL... FOR ME
DAREDEVIL...
MATT...



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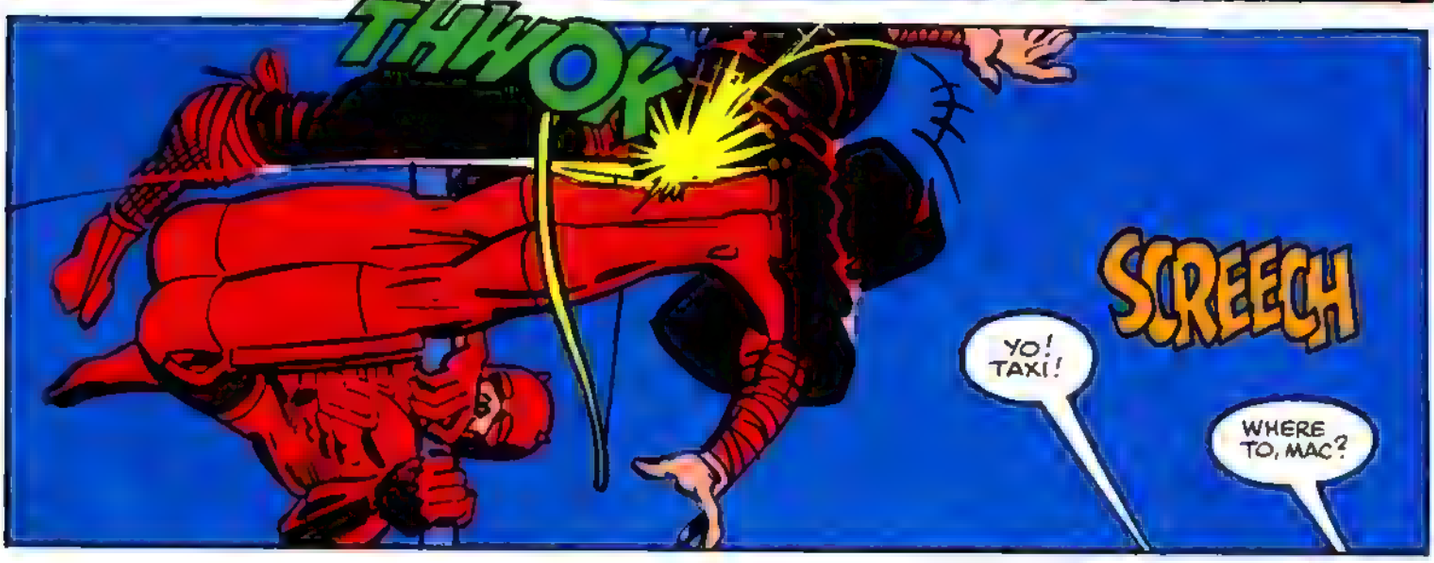
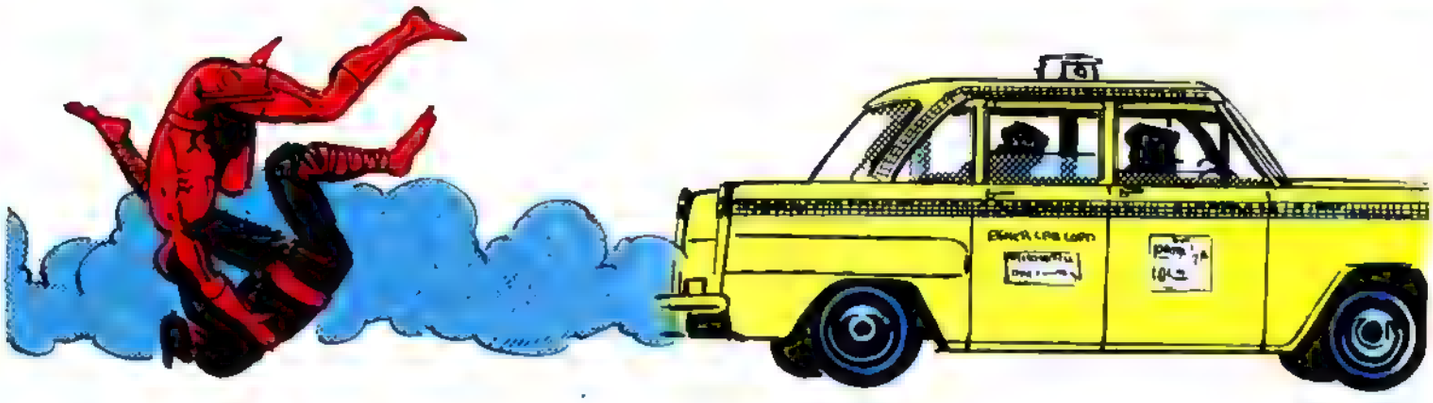
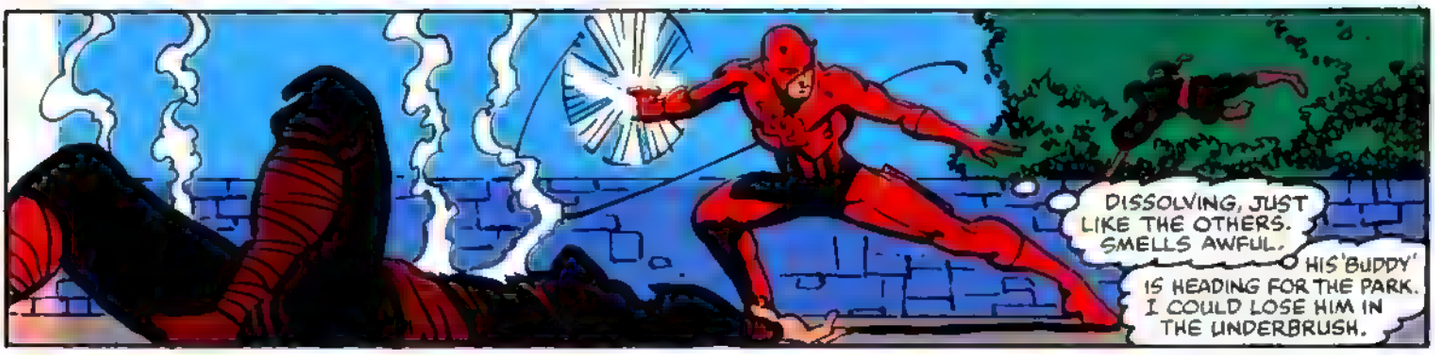
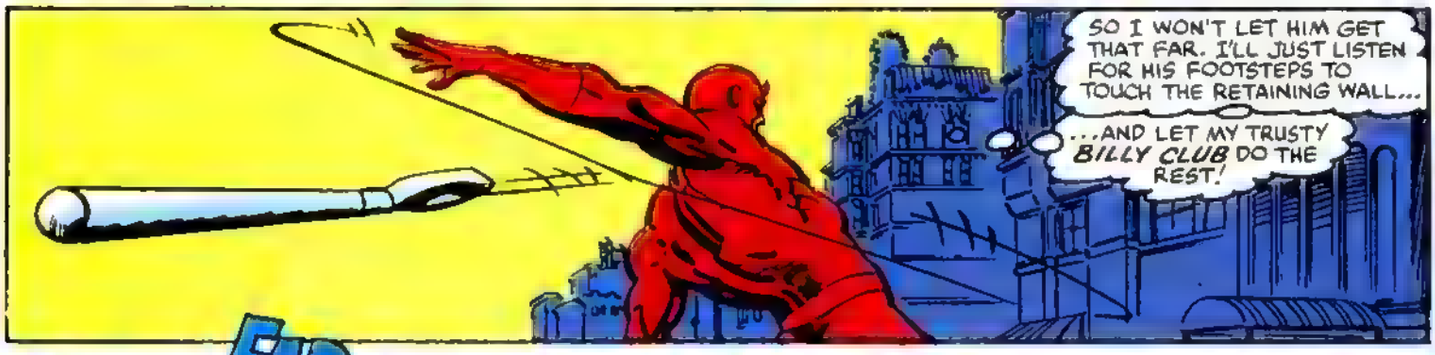
SOON...
GOTTA HUSTLE. THE DEFENSE IN THE POTTER CASE IS DUE TO PROCEED IN AN HOUR, AND MATT DOESN'T WANT TO HANDLE IT ALONE.
HE'S ASKED ME TO STAY ON AS HIS PARTNER, EVEN IF MY FINANCIAL WIZARDRY DID LOSE US OUR STOREFRONT OFFICES.
MATT'S A GOOD FRIEND-- BETTER THAN I DESERVE, THAT'S FOR SURE.
HE COULD'VE REALLY STUCK IT TO ME.
YO! TAXI!
YOU'RE HOT TODAY, NELSON. CAN'T EVEN SCORE A CAB.
TWNNGGG


THWOK
SCREECH
YO! TAXI!
WHERE TO, MAC?



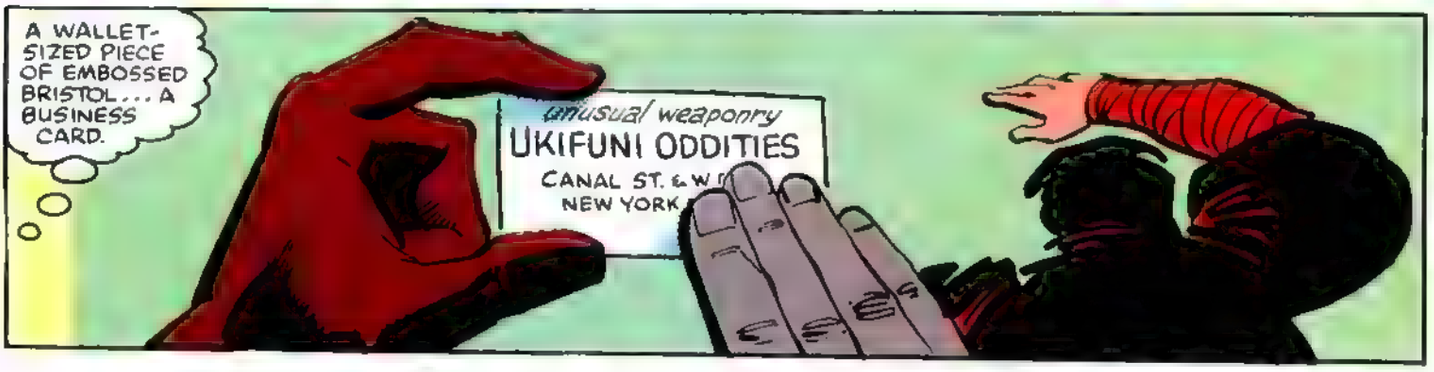
YOU WILL LEARN NOTH-UURRGH!!
TALK TO ME, NINJA. WHERE'S YOUR HIDEOUT?
CHUKK

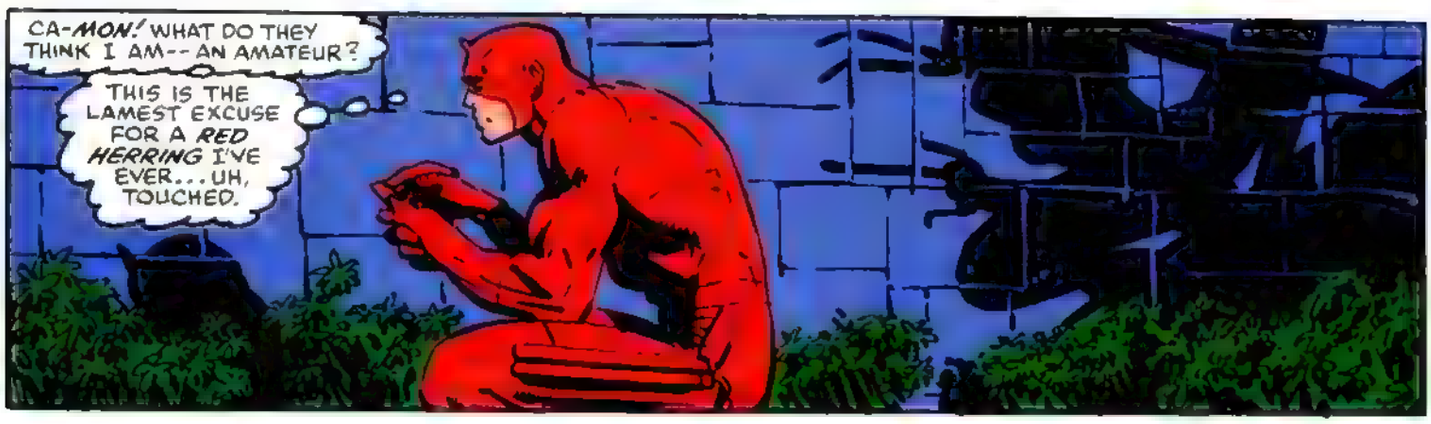

DISSOLVING, JUST LIKE THE OTHERS. SMELLS AWFUL.
HIS 'BUDDY' IS HEADING FOR THE PARK. I COULD LOSE HIM IN THE UNDERBRUSH.

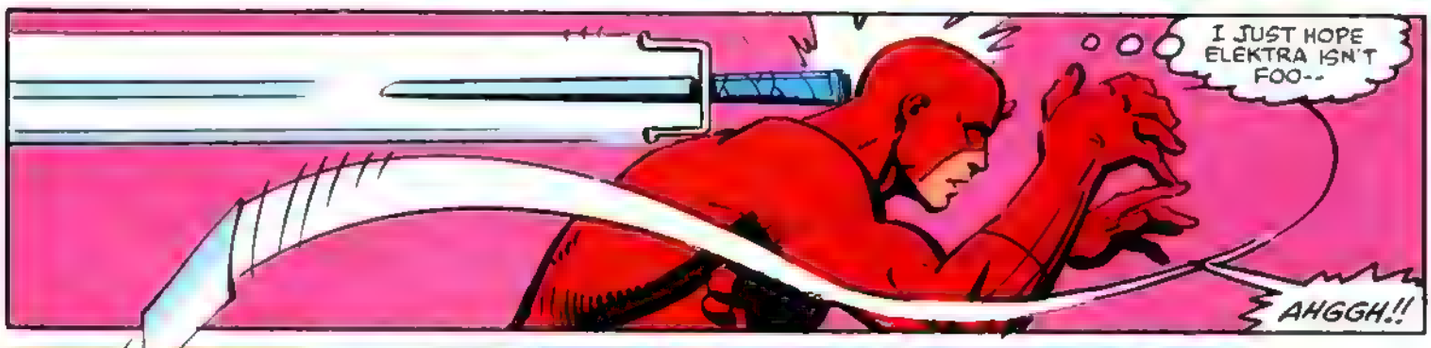

SO I WON'T LET HIM GET THAT FAR. I'LL JUST LISTEN FOR HIS FOOTSTEPS TO TOUCH THE RETAINING WALL...
...AND LET MY TRUSTY BILLY CLUB DO THE REST!

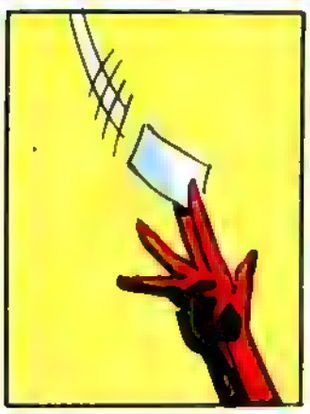
FAPP

HMM... HE DIDN'T DISSOLVE. COSTUME MUST BE ON THE FRITZ.
HEY-- WHAT'S THIS?

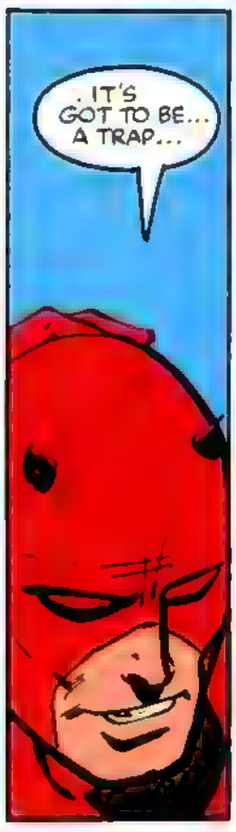

A WALLET-SIZED PIECE OF EMBOSSED BRISTOL... A BUSINESS CARD.
unusual weaponry
UKIFUNI ODDITIES
CANAL ST. & W
NEW YORK


CA-MON! WHAT DO THEY THINK I AM-- AN AMATEUR?
THIS IS THE LAMEST EXCUSE FOR A RED HERRING I'VE EVER... UH, TOUCHED.

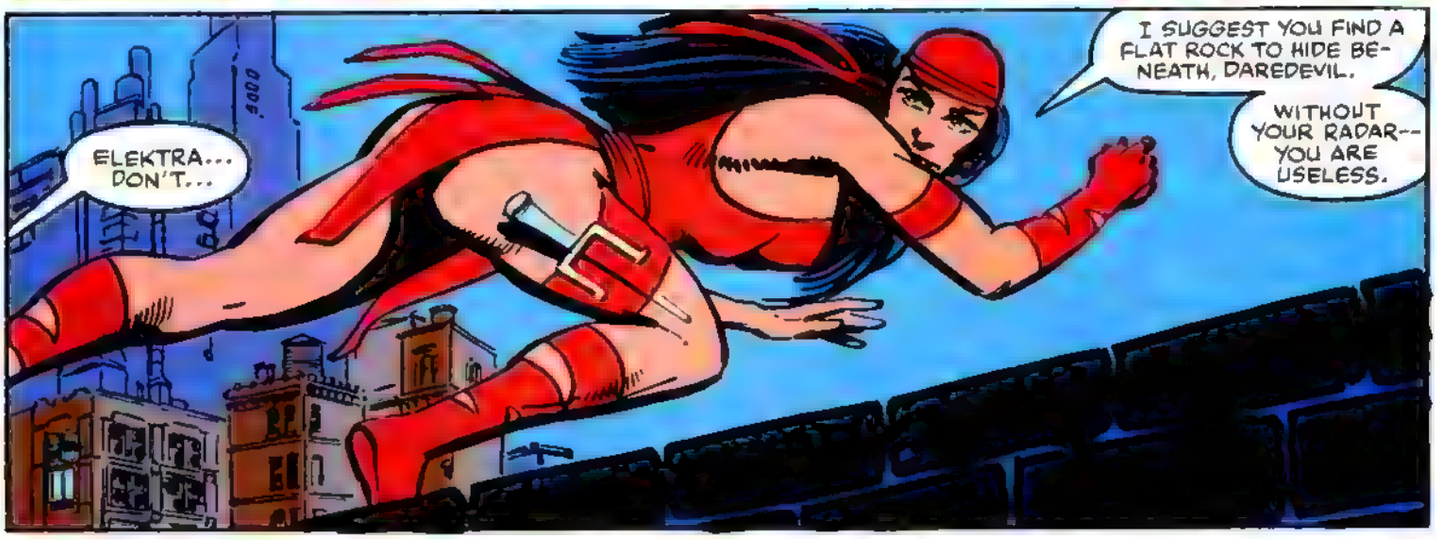

I JUST HOPE ELEKTRA ISN'T FOO--
AHGGH!!

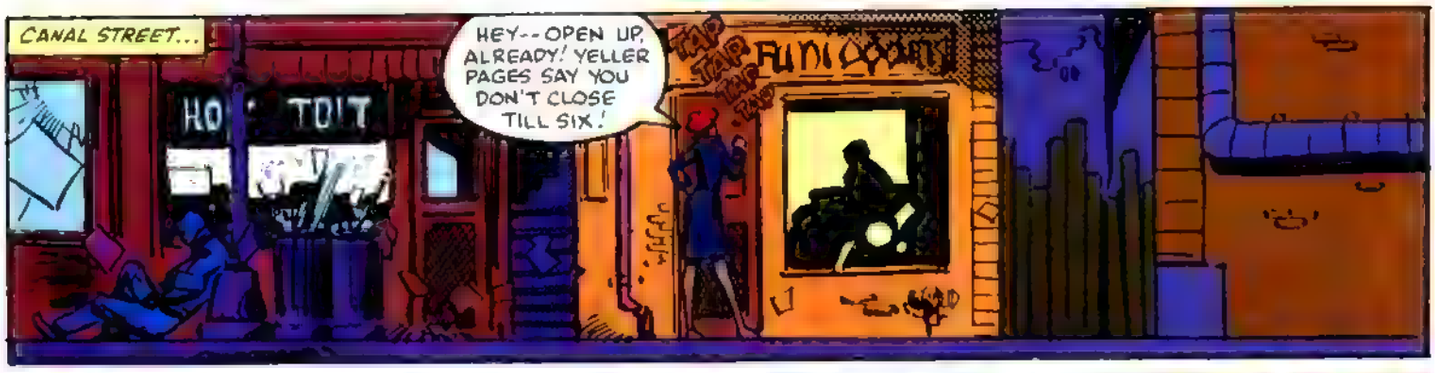


WE BOTH SEEK THE NINJA, DAREDEVIL! AND WE HAVE BOTH FOUND THEM!
ELEKTRA... YOU CAN'T GO THERE...


IT'S GOT TO BE... A TRAP...

CERTAINLY. THE QUESTION IS, WHOSE TRAP?
THE NINJA YOU JUST DOWNED DID NOT DISSOLVE. HE CANNOT BE ONE OF THE HAND.
SOMEONE ELSE IS AT WORK HERE. PERHAPS AIDING ME.

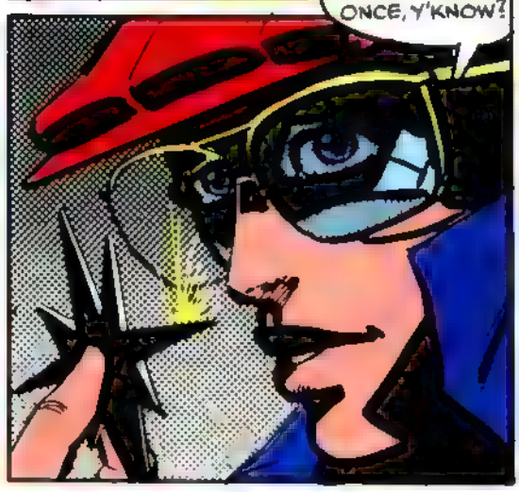

ELEKTRA... DON'T...
I SUGGEST YOU FIND A FLAT ROCK TO HIDE BENEATH, DAREDEVIL.
WITHOUT YOUR RADAR-- YOU ARE USELESS.

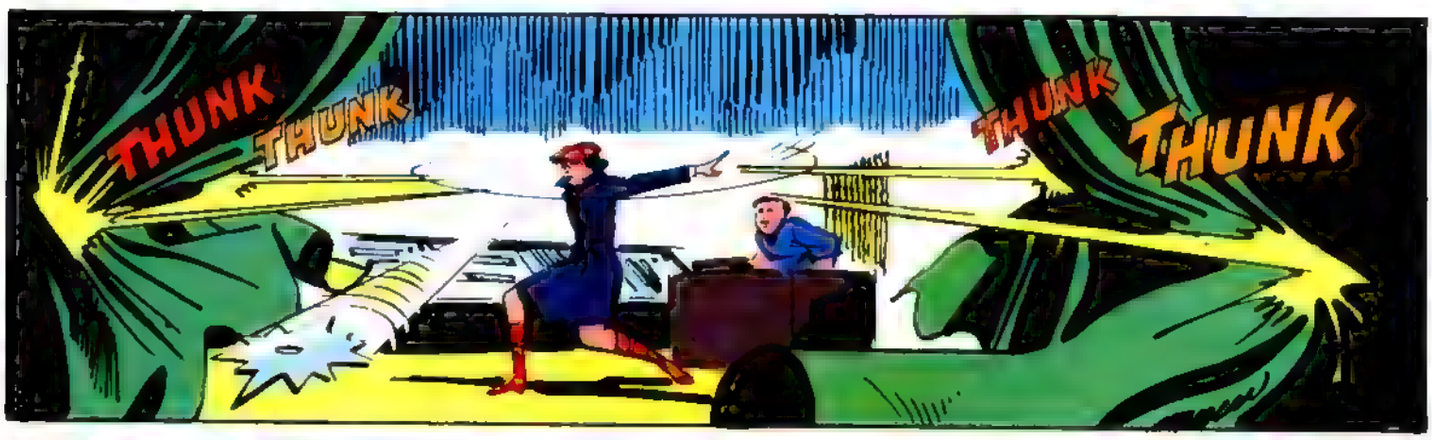

CANAL STREET...
HEY--OPEN UP, ALREADY! YELLER PAGES SAY YOU DON'T CLOSE TILL SIX!
TAP TAP TAP TAP
FUN

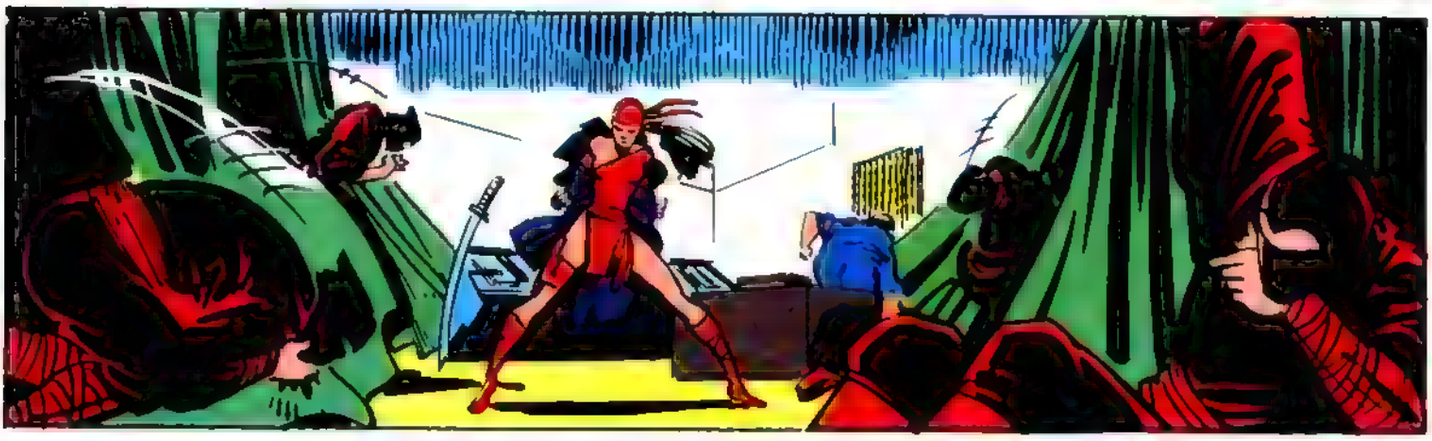
SO SORRY. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
IT AIN'T FER ME. IT'S FER RICKY.

HE'S, LIKE, MY BOYFRIEND, Y'KNOW, AN' IT'S, LIKE IT'S HIS BIRTHDAY, AN' HE WANTS SOME OF THEM THERE FALLING STARS!
FALLING--? YOU MUST MEAN THROWING STARS. SHURIKEN.
YEAH. THAT'S THEM!

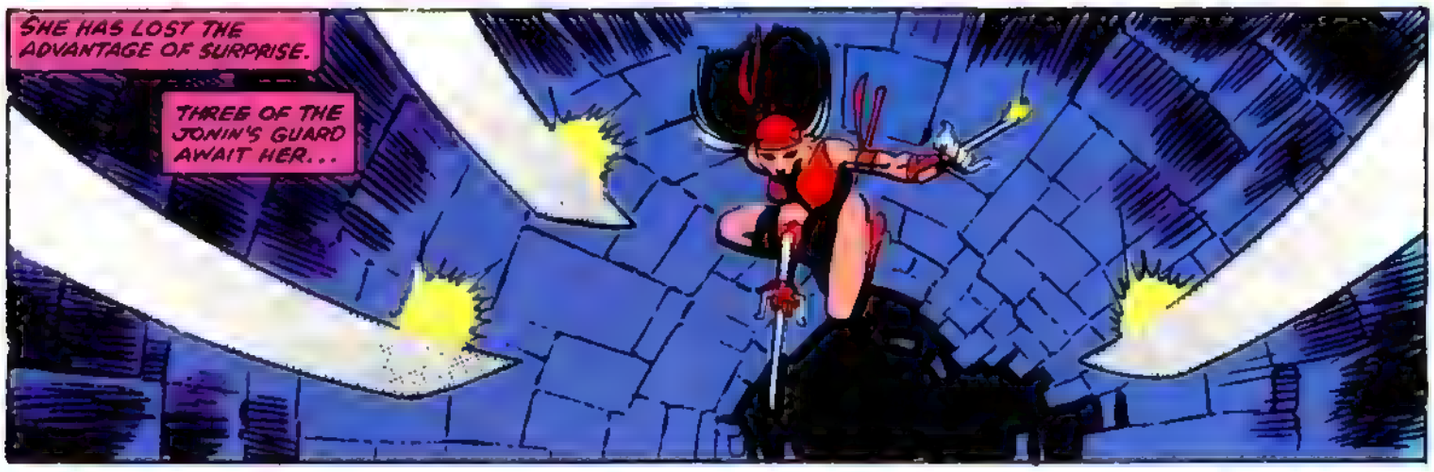
SURE ARE PRETTY. I'LL TAKE ALL OF 'EM.
THEY ARE EXPENSIVE.

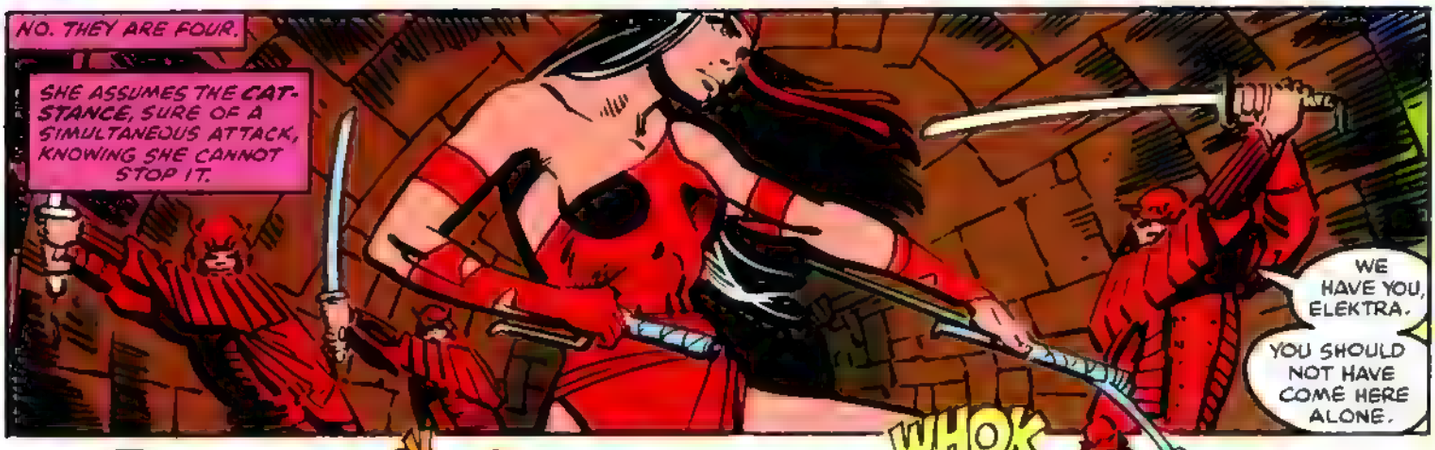

SO WHAT? Y'ONLY LIVE ONCE, Y'KNOW?

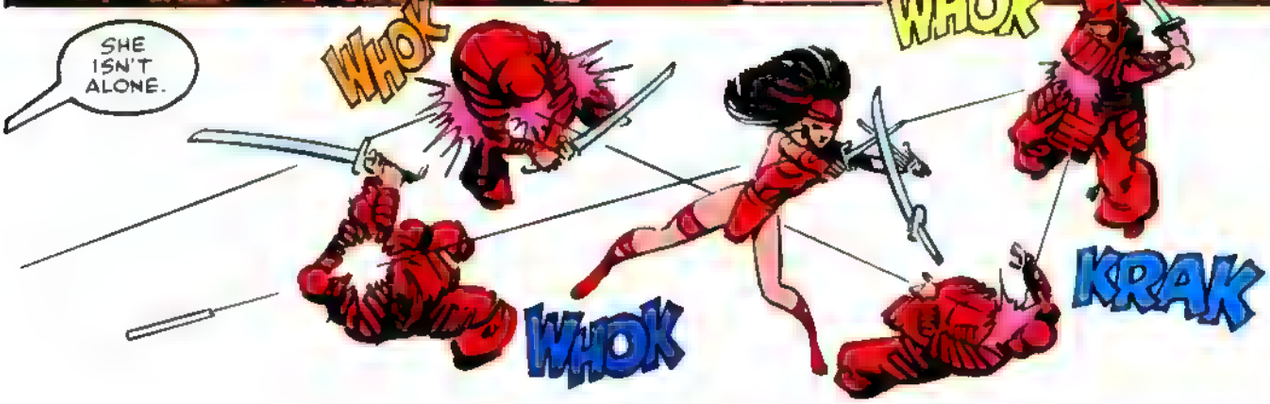

THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK

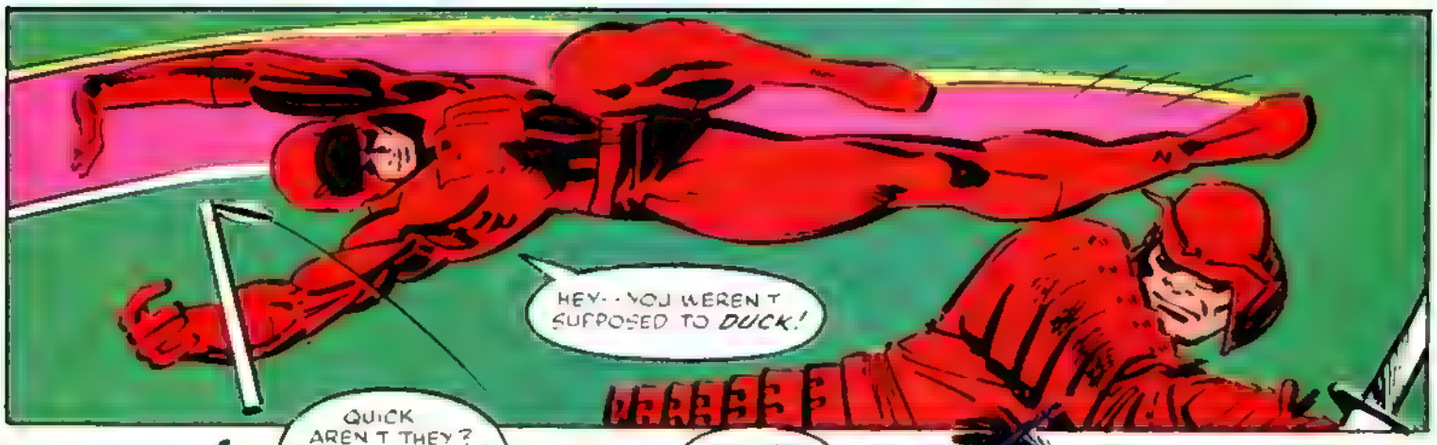


JONIN!
IT IS SHE!
ELEKTRA HAS FOUND US! SHE--
NNNNGGG
THUNK

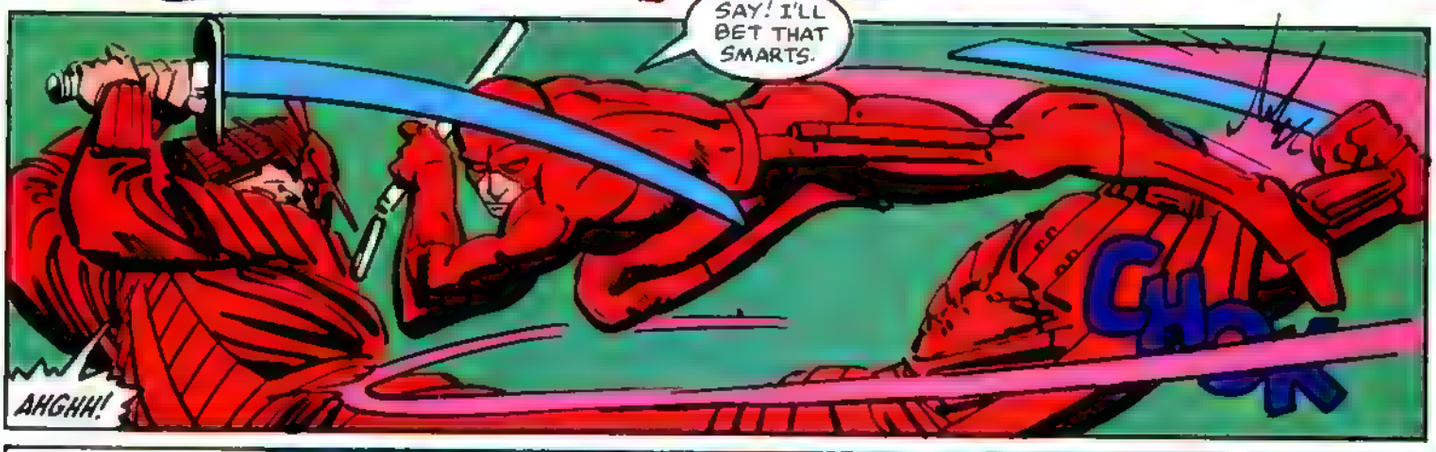

SHE HAS LOST THE ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE.
THREE OF THE JONIN'S GUARD AWAIT HER...

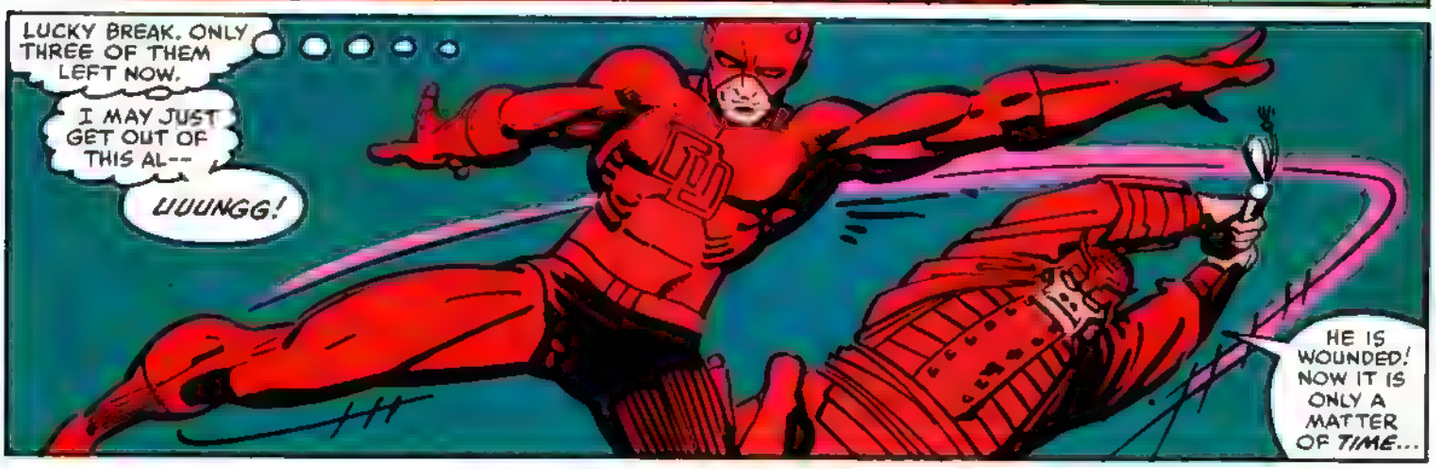

NO. THEY ARE FOUR.
SHE ASSUMES THE CAT-STANCE, SURE OF A SIMULTANEOUS ATTACK, KNOWING SHE CANNOT STOP IT.
WE HAVE YOU, ELEKTRA.
YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE COME HERE ALONE.


SHE ISN'T ALONE.
WHOK
WHOK
WHOK
KRAK

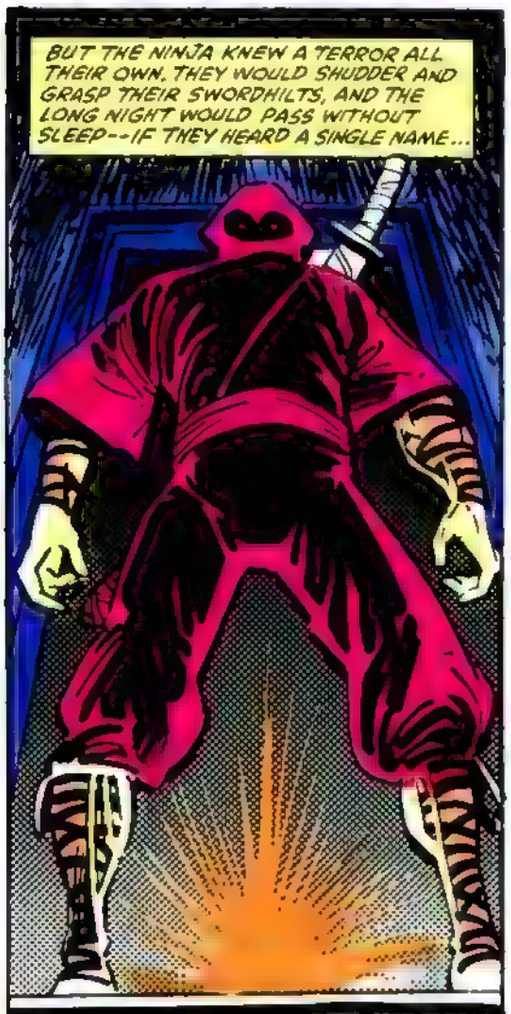

HEY-- YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO DUCK!

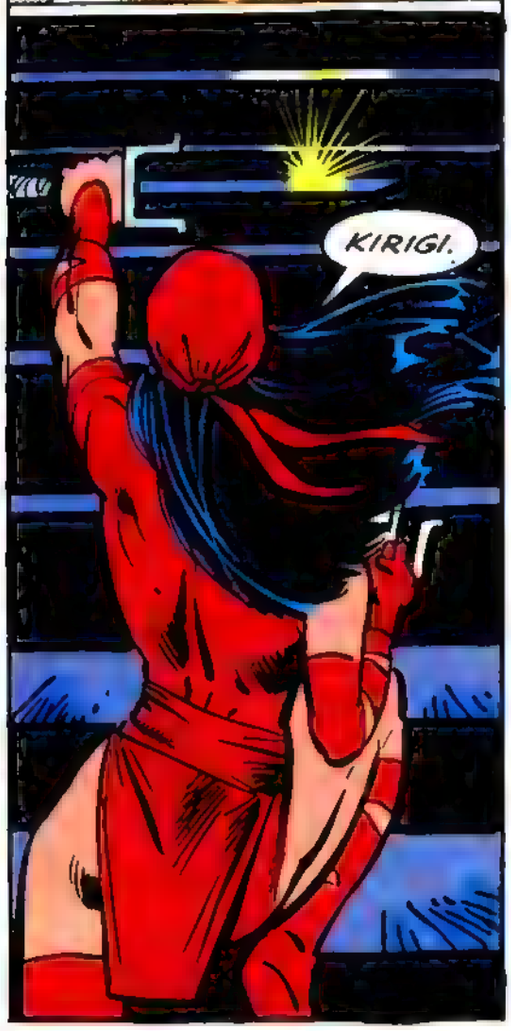
QUICK AREN'T THEY? BUT TOGETHER WE CAN-- ELEKTRA?
WHERE'D YOU GO?
WHUDD

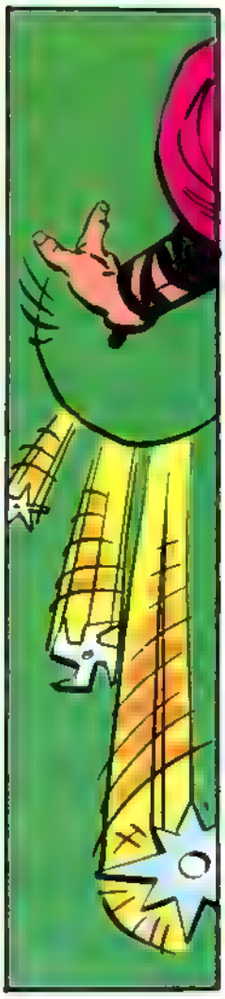

SAY! I'LL BET THAT SMARTS.
AHGHH!

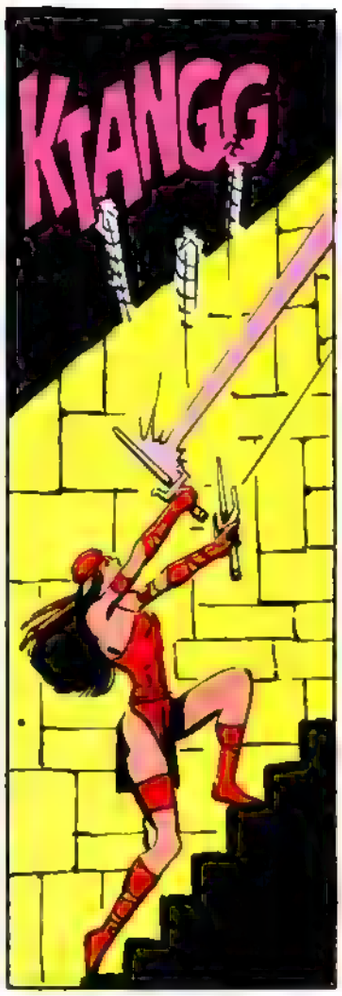

LUCKY BREAK. ONLY THREE OF THEM LEFT NOW.
I MAY JUST GET OUT OF THIS AL--
UUUNGG!
HE IS WOUNDED! NOW IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME...

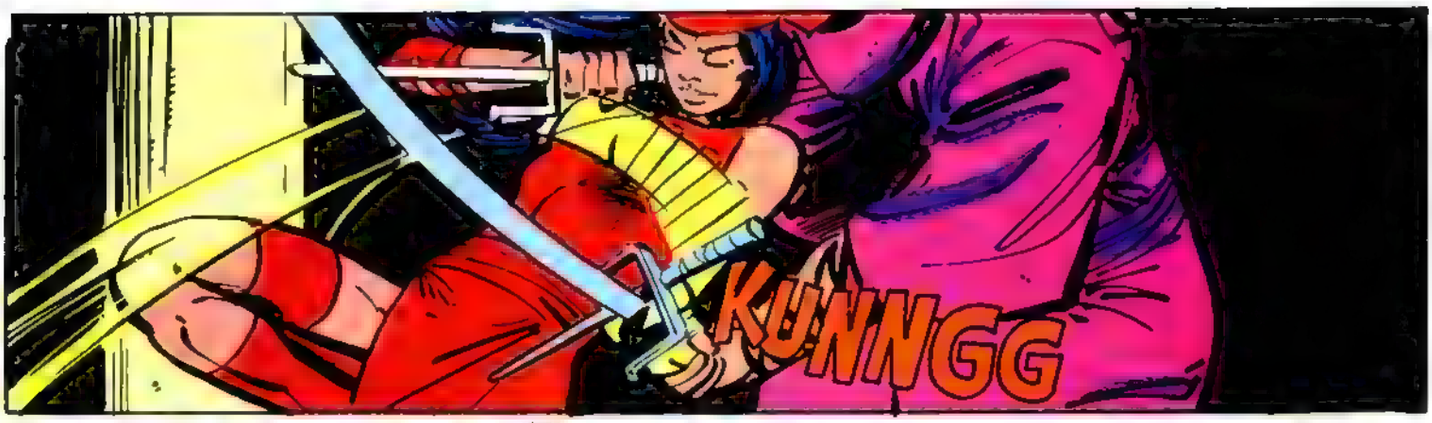
HUDDLED ABOUT THEIR CAMPFIRES, MASTER WARRIORS OF OLD JAPAN SPOKE FEARFULLY OF THE **NINJA**, WHO SEEMED POSSESSED WITH MYSTIC WAYS OF DEALING DEATH.

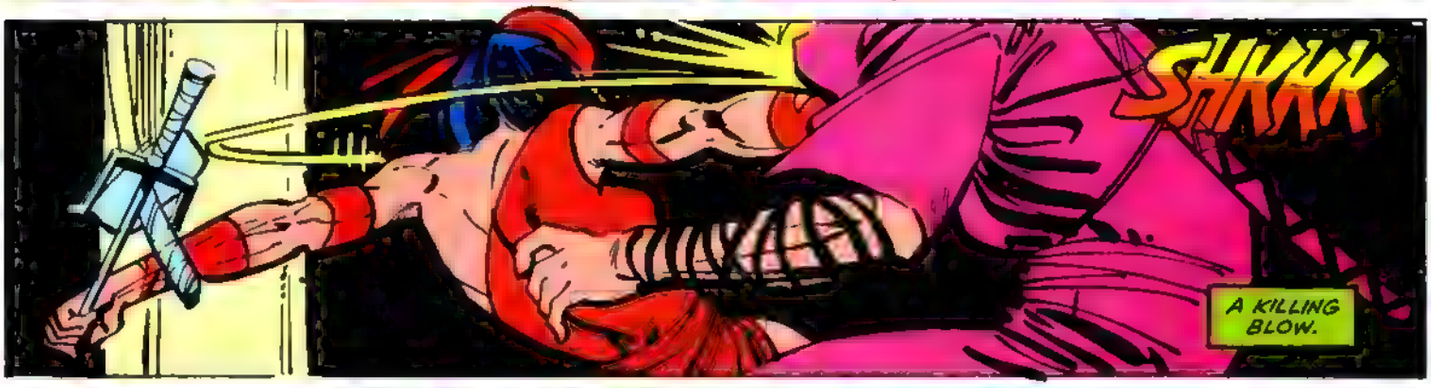


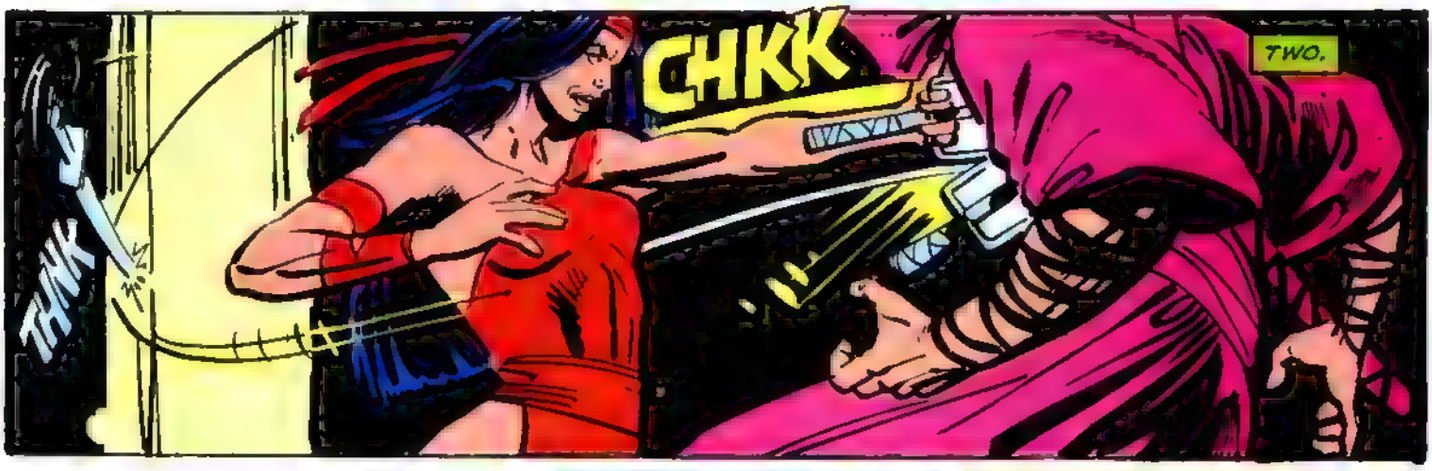




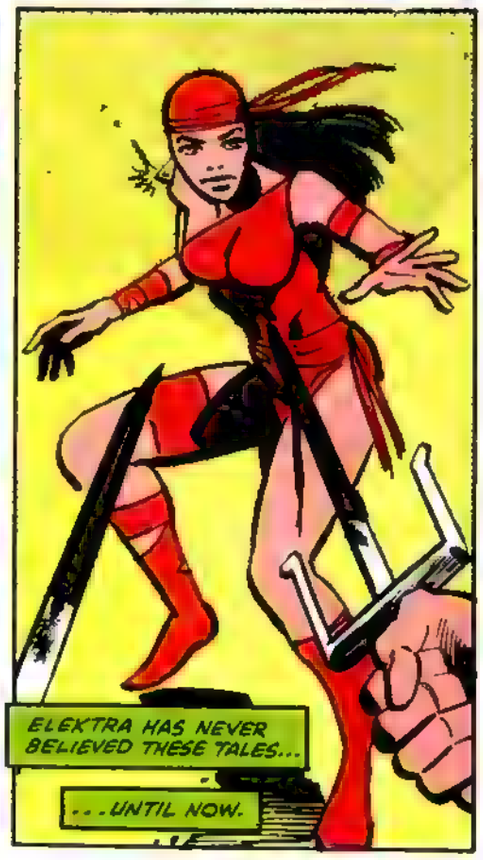


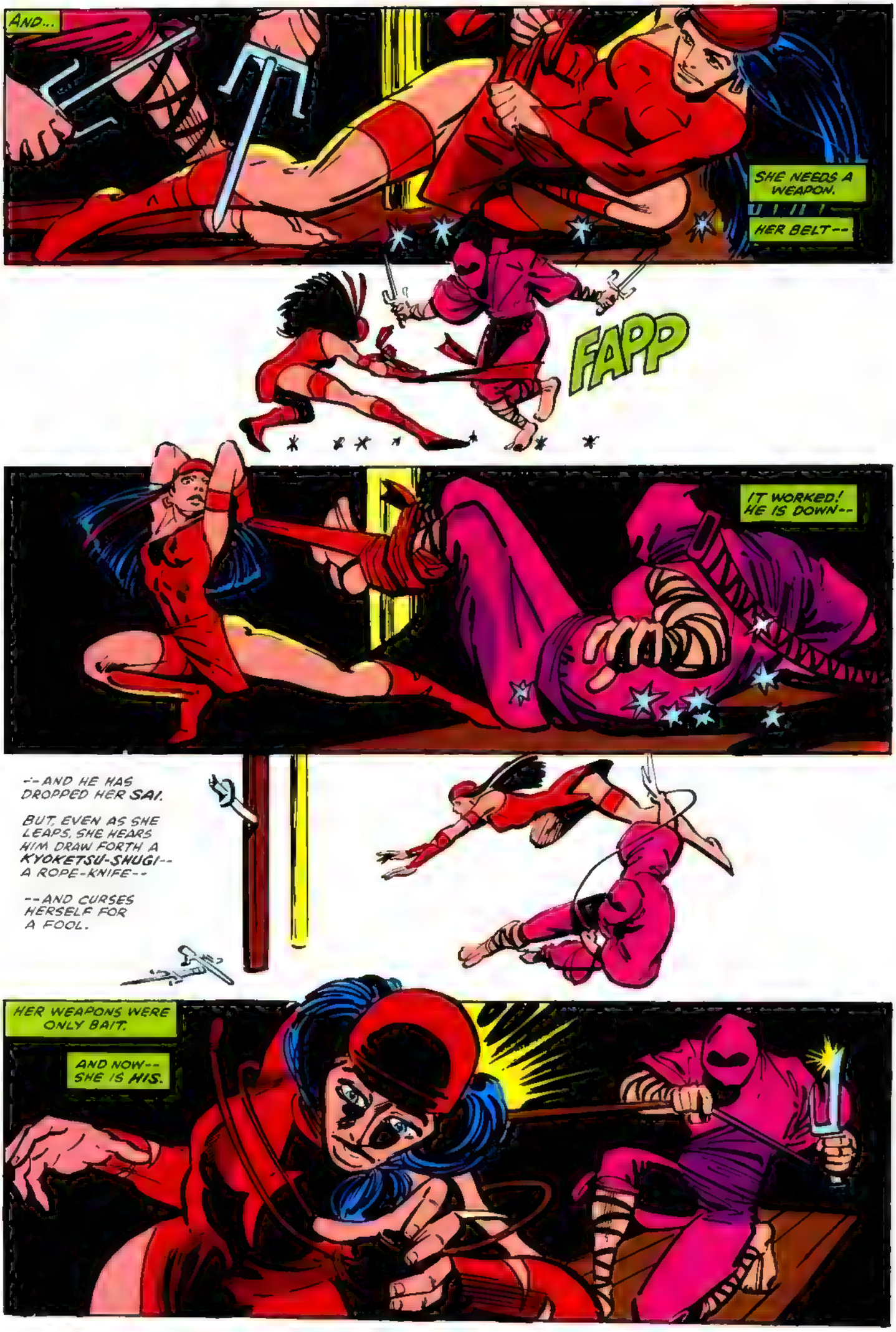

KUNNGG

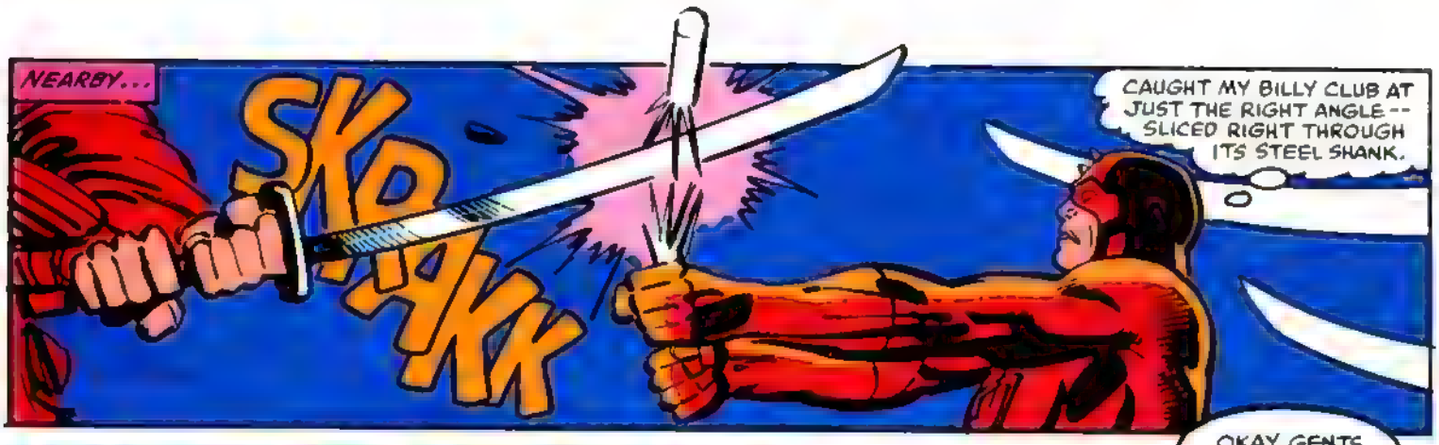

SHKKK
A KILLING BLOW.


THNK
CHKK
TWO.

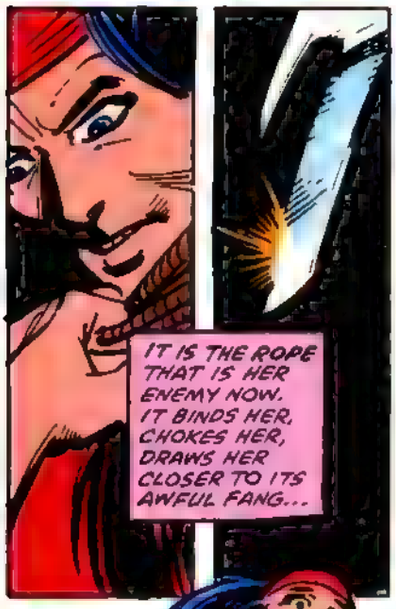
IT IS SAID THAT KIRIGI HAS SERVED A SCORE OF JONIN-- ACROSS A SPAN OF CENTURIES.
IT IS SAID THAT NO MORTAL FORCE CAN BRING HIM HARM.

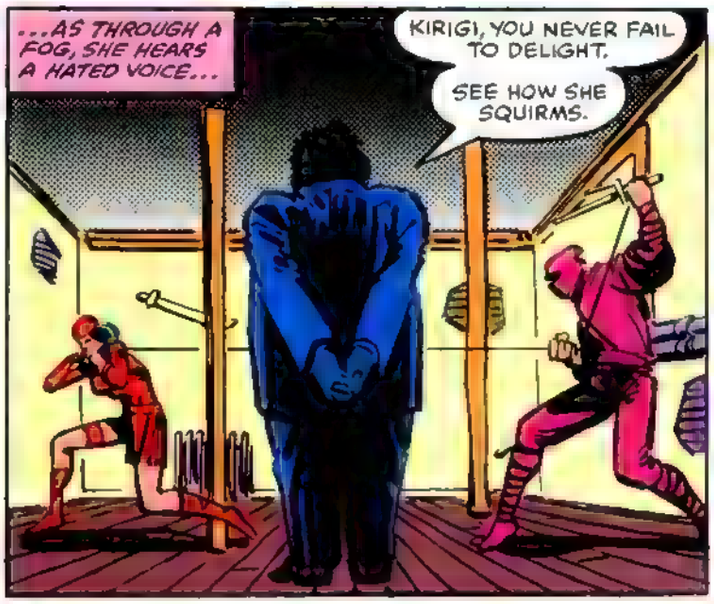

ELEKTRA HAS NEVER BELIEVED THESE TALES...
...UNTIL NOW.


AND...
SHE NEEDS A WEAPON.
HER BELT--
FAPP
IT WORKED! HE IS DOWN--
--AND HE HAS DROPPED HER SAI.
BUT, EVEN AS SHE LEAPS, SHE HEARS HIM DRAW FORTH A KYOKETSU-SHUGI-- A ROPE-KNIFE--
--AND CURSES HERSELF FOR A FOOL.
HER WEAPONS WERE ONLY BAIT.
AND NOW-- SHE IS HIS.


NEARBY...
SKRAKK
CAUGHT MY BILLY CLUB AT JUST THE RIGHT ANGLE -- SLICED RIGHT THROUGH ITS STEEL SHANK.

OKAY, GENTS. THE PARTY JUST GOT ROUGH!
YAGGH!
THONK


IT IS THE ROPE THAT IS HER ENEMY NOW. IT BINDS HER, CHOKES HER, DRAWS HER CLOSER TO ITS AWFUL FANG...


...AS THROUGH A FOG, SHE HEARS A HATED VOICE...
KIRIGI, YOU NEVER FAIL TO DELIGHT.
SEE HOW SHE SQUIRMS.

YOU COULD HAVE PLEASED ME, ELEKTRA, IN A WAY MORE INTIMATE THAN THIS. I OFFERED YOU THE CHANCE, YEARS AGO.
BUT YOU LAUGHED AT ME. YOU LAUGHED AT ME AND YOU WENT AWAY.
NOW IS MY TURN TO LAUGH, YES.

THE ROPE...SHE MUST KILL IT, SOMEHOW. SHE MUST MEET ITS FANG...

...WITH ONE OF HER OWN.

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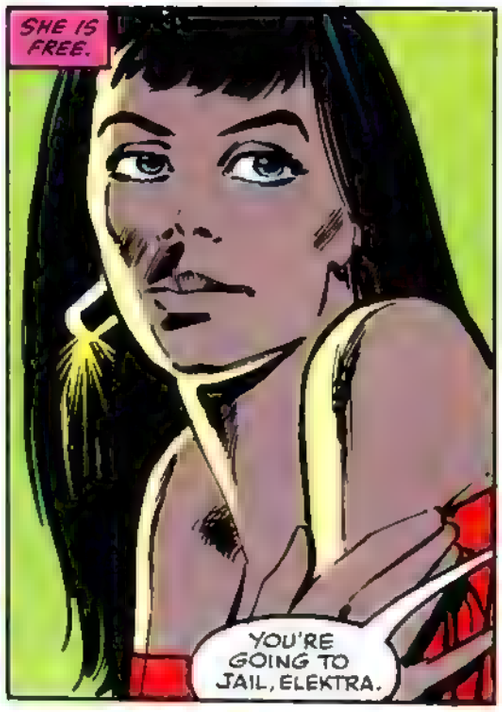
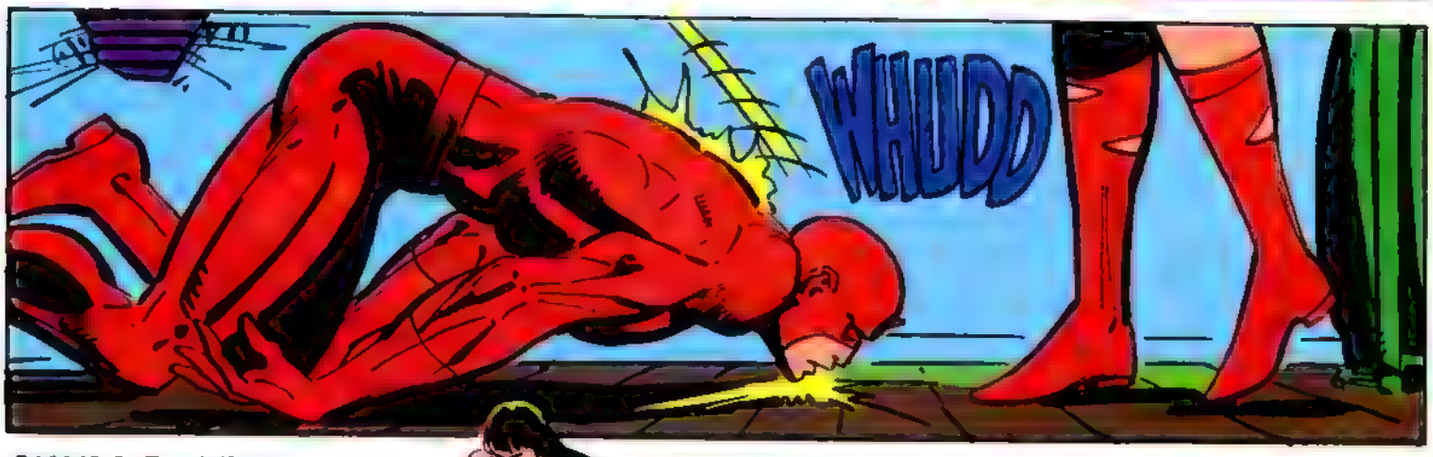
THE JONIN DIED QUICKLY, IF NOT SILENTLY.
THE HAND WILL HUNT HER NO LONGER.


SHE IS FREE.
YOU'RE GOING TO JAIL, ELEKTRA.

YOU'RE A KILLER... A COLD-BLOODED ASSASSIN...
...AND I'M TAKING... YOU...IN...

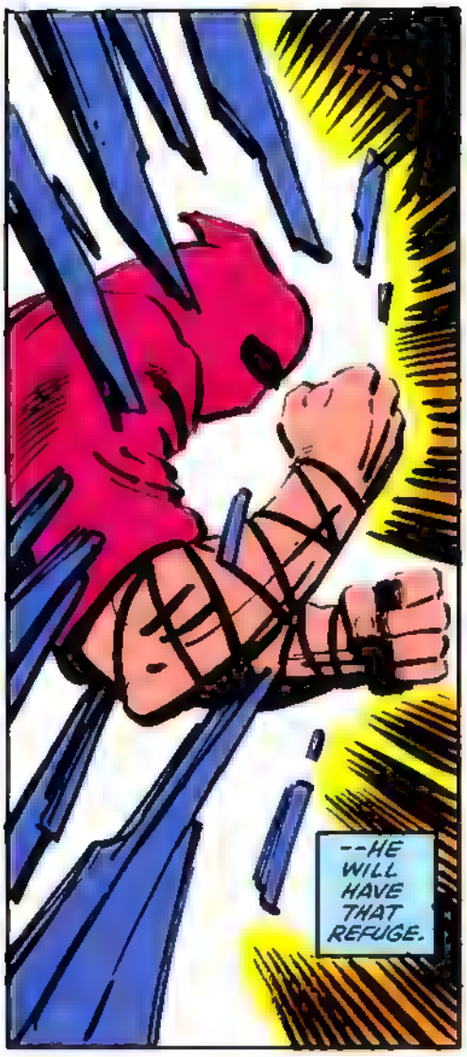

WHUDD

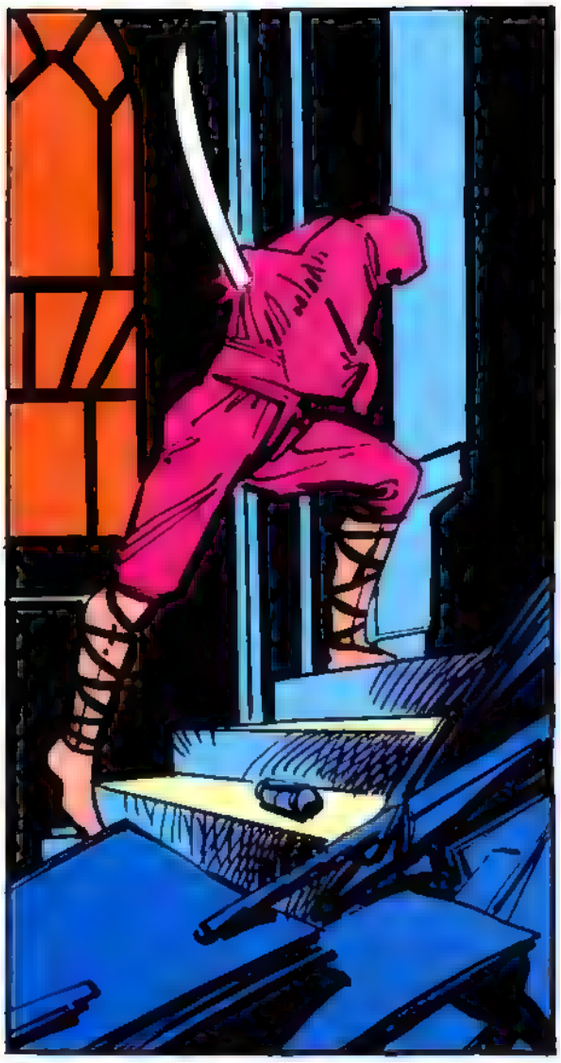
PASSED OUT... AND LOSING A DANGEROUS AMOUNT OF BLOOD.
LEFT HERE, UNBANDAGED, HE WOULD SURELY DIE.

AND ELEKTRA WOULD FINALLY BE FREE OF HIM, AS WELL...

DAWN, SOMEWHERE ON NEW YORK CITY'S LOWER EAST SIDE...

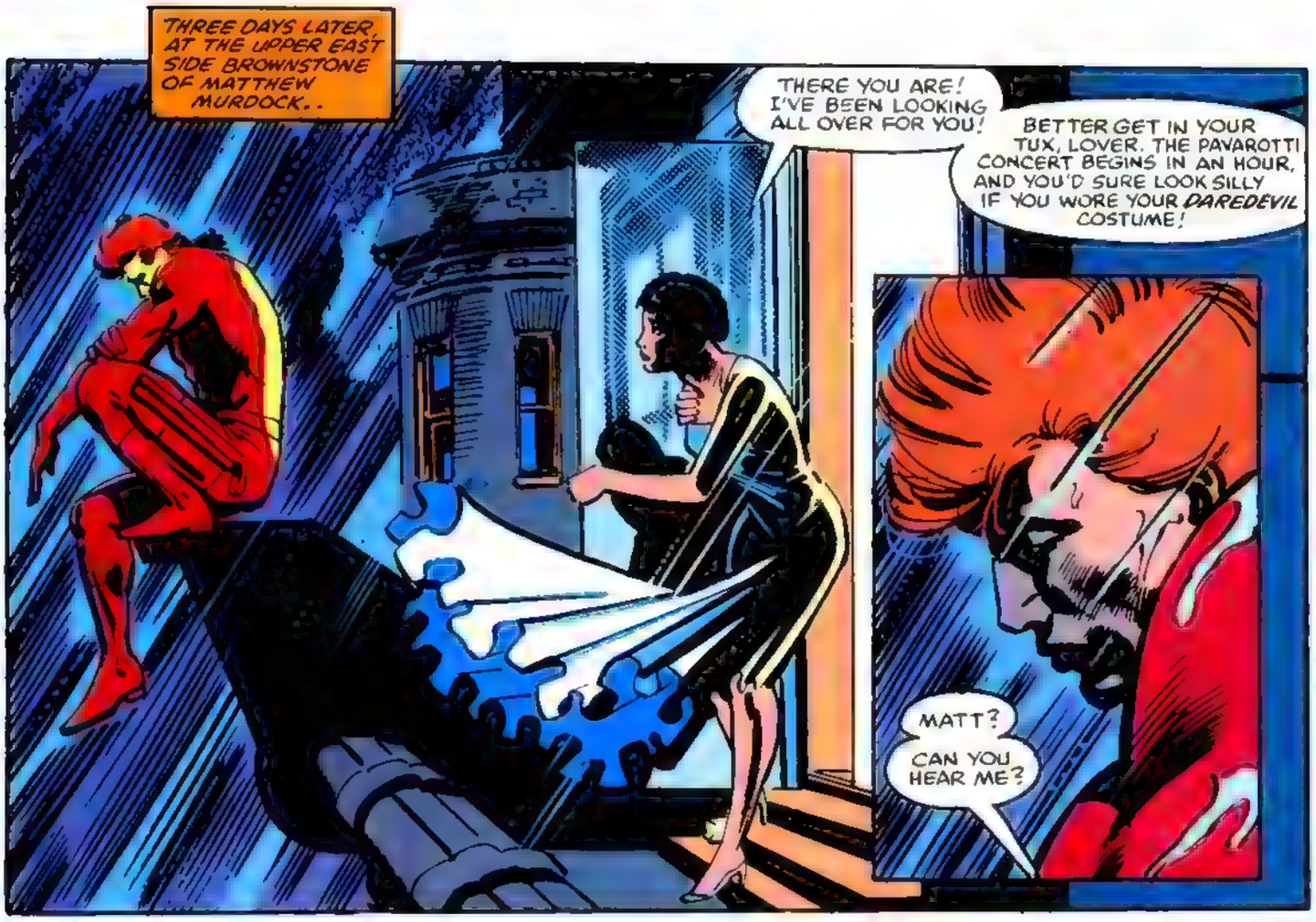
HE IS KIRIGI AND HIS NAME IS A LEGEND THAT HAS BEEN WHISPERED BY THE DYING AND THE DOOMED ACROSS THE CENTURIES SINCE THE FEUDAL STRUGGLES OF OLD JAPAN.
KIRIGI--THE MAN-DEMON TERROR OF EVEN THE BOLDEST SAMURAI...
KIRIGI--THE ASSASSIN EVEN THE NINJA FEARED...
KIRIGI--THE IMMORTAL...
TRUE OR NOT, HE BELIEVES HIS LEGEND. AND THAT IS ENOUGH, FOR NOW, TO KEEP HIM ALIVE...
HOSPITAL
THWAKK
HE CANNOT DIE. HE MUST NOT--UNTIL THE DEATH OF HIS MASTER HAS BEEN AVENGED. UNTIL THE WOMAN ELEKTRA--WHO STRUCK DOWN HIS JONIN AND SKEWERED KIRIGI WITH HIS OWN SHIRA TACHI--HAS PAID FOR HER CRIMES.
HE SEEKS REFUGE. AND THOUGH THE TEMPLE'S DOORS ARE BOARDED--

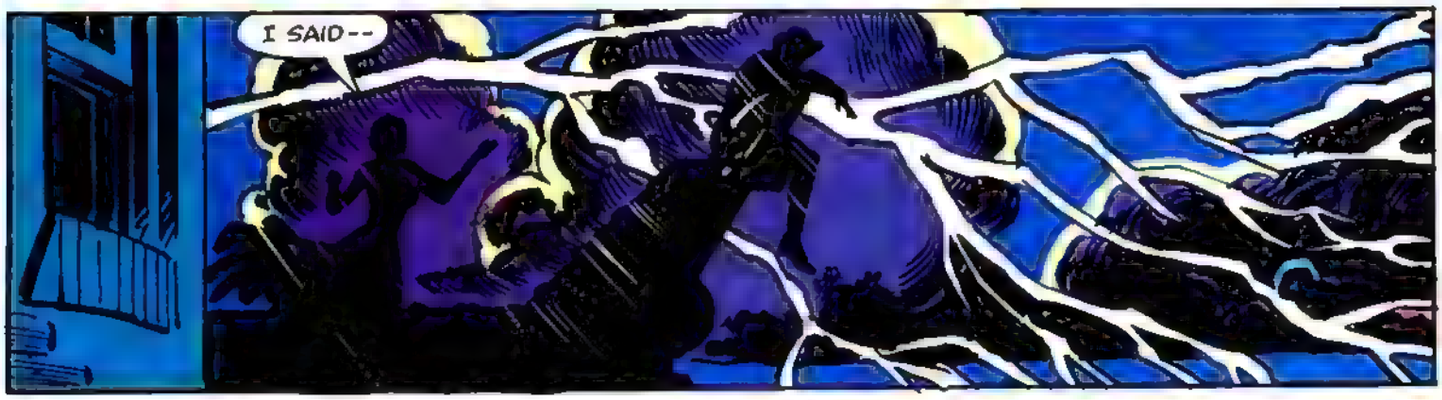

--HE WILL HAVE THAT REFUGE.

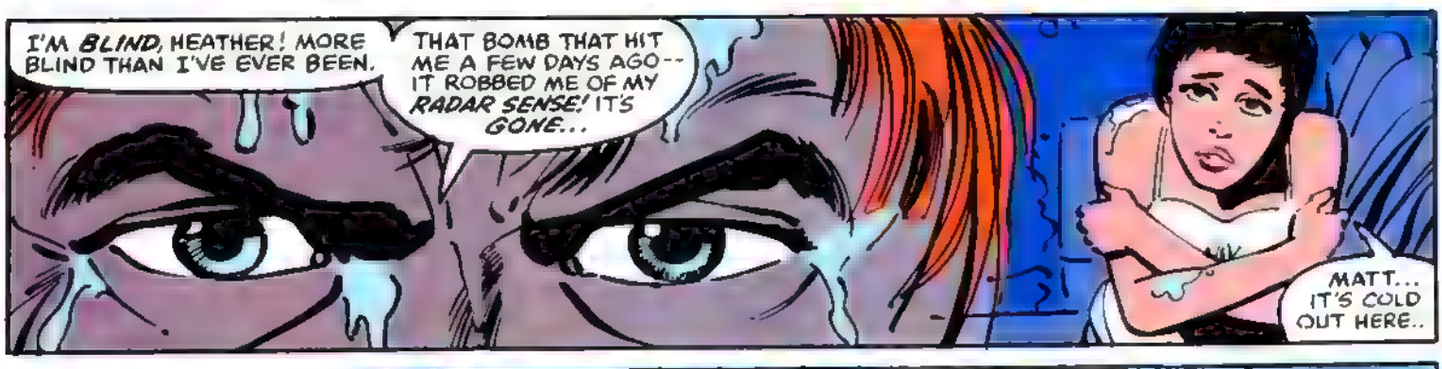


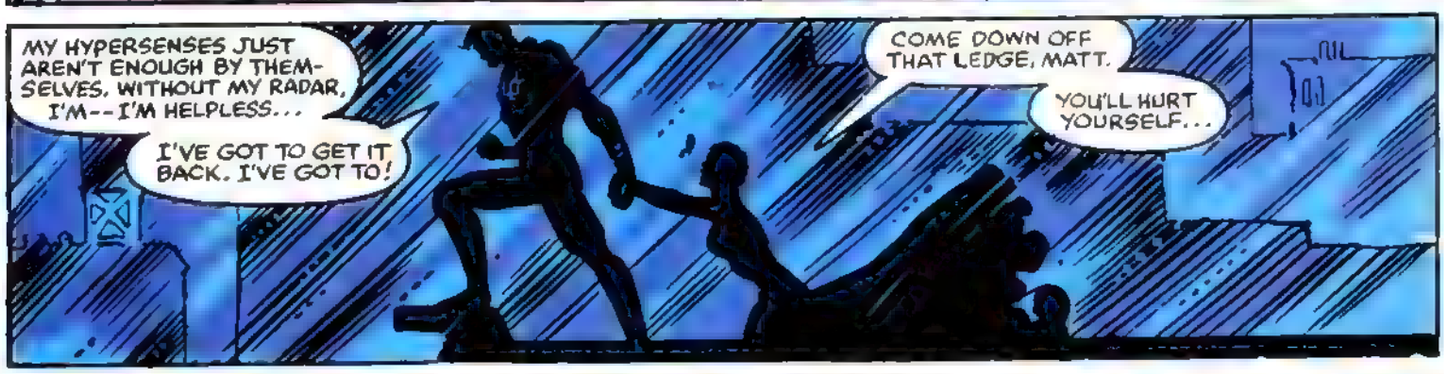
...

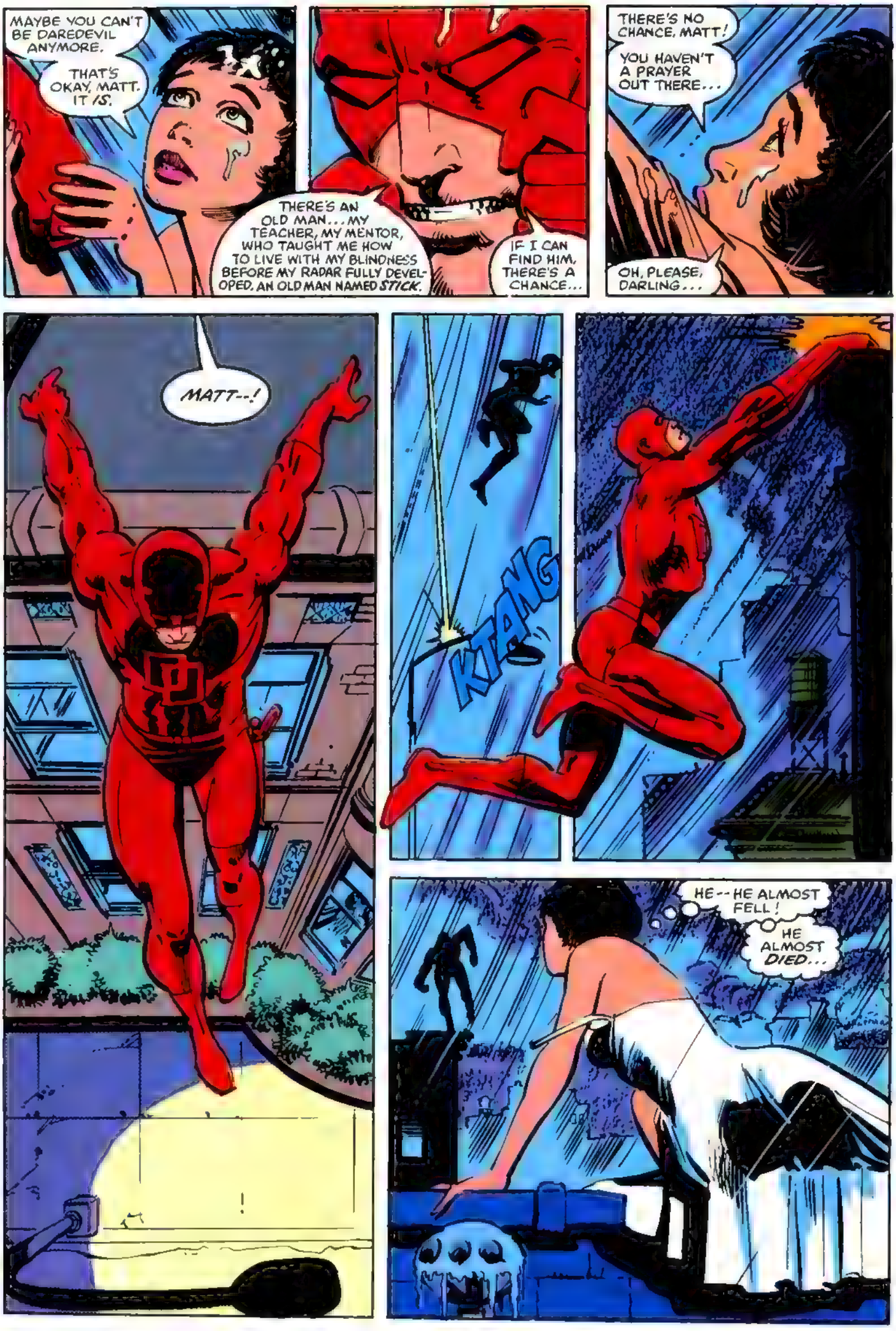
THE MASTERS OF DEATH KNOW SECRET WAYS OF STAYING ITS ICY TOUCH. HIDDEN IN HIS BLOOD-SOAKED ROBE ARE LIFE-GIVING SUBSTANCES THAT HE WILL APPLY TO HIS WOUNDS.
HE WILL MEDITATE. HE WILL HEAL.
AND THOUGH THIS CITY IS STRANGE AND LOUD AND MIGHTY, HE WILL FIND ELEKTRA.
AND SHE WILL DIE.


THREE DAYS LATER, AT THE UPPER EAST SIDE BROWNSTONE OF MATTHEW MURDOCK..
THERE YOU ARE! I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!
BETTER GET IN YOUR TUX, LOVER. THE PAVAROTTI CONCERT BEGINS IN AN HOUR, AND YOU'D SURE LOOK SILLY IF YOU WORE YOUR DAREDEVIL COSTUME!
MATT?
CAN YOU HEAR ME?


I SAID--


I'M BLIND, HEATHER! MORE BLIND THAN I'VE EVER BEEN.
THAT BOMB THAT HIT ME A FEW DAYS AGO-- IT ROBBED ME OF MY RADAR SENSE! IT'S GONE...
MATT... IT'S COLD OUT HERE..


MY HYPERSENSES JUST AREN'T ENOUGH BY THEMSELVES, WITHOUT MY RADAR, I'M--I'M HELPLESS...
I'VE GOT TO GET IT BACK. I'VE GOT TO!
COME DOWN OFF THAT LEDGE, MATT.
YOU'LL HURT YOURSELF...



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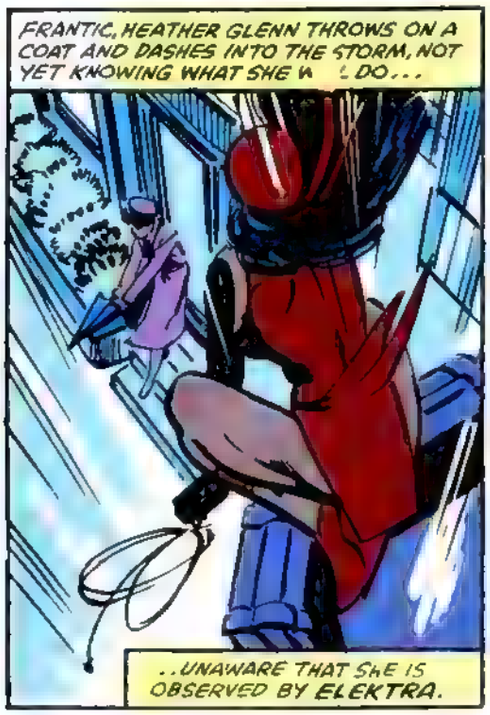
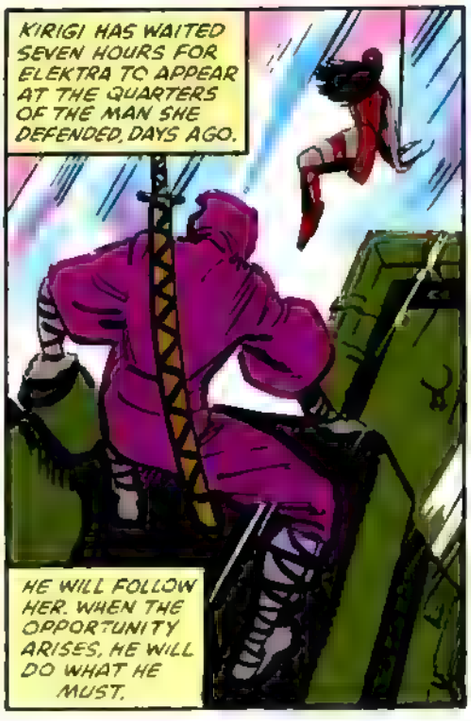
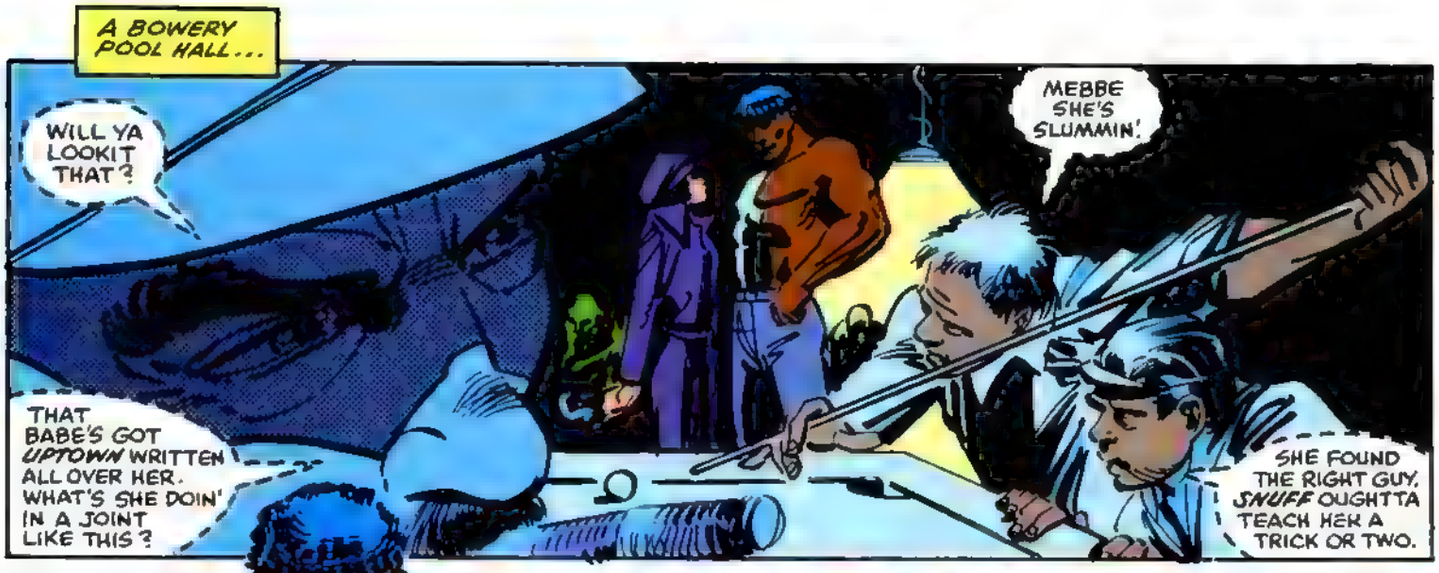
HOW COULD HE DO THIS TO ME?
DOESN'T HE CARE?
NO, NO HE DOESN'T. IF HE CARED, HE'D STAY RIGHT HERE. BUT HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT ME AT ALL.
HE'LL LEAVE ME ALL ALONE, JUST LIKE DADDY DID.
ALL ALONE...
DAREDEVIL'S ALL THAT MATTERS TO HIM. HE'LL GO OUT AND BREAK HIS FOOL NECK FOR D...

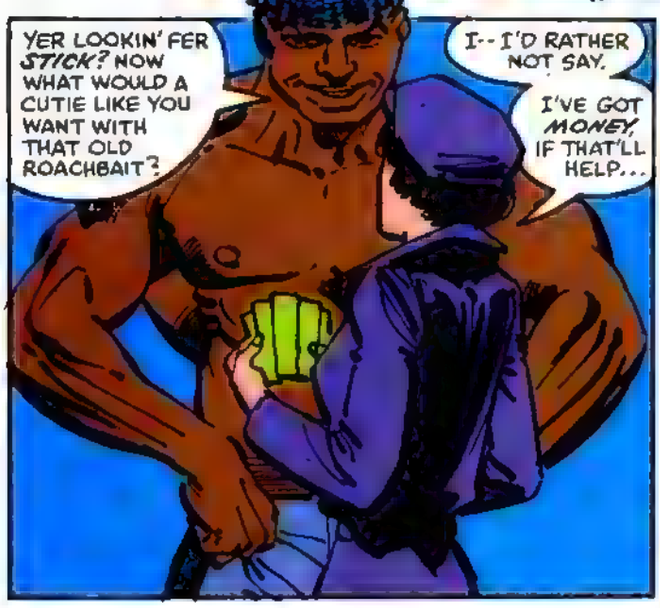
LET HIM! IT DOESN'T MATTER!
HE'S NOT THE ONLY MAN IN THE WORLD! HE...
HE'S THE ONLY MAN ...FOR ME.
I'VE GOT TO HELP HIM...
HE'LL BE KILLED.


FRANTIC, HEATHER GLENN THROWS ON A COAT AND DASHES INTO THE STORM, NOT YET KNOWING WHAT SHE W L DO...
..UNAWARE THAT SHE IS OBSERVED BY ELEKTRA.

ELEKTRA--MERCENARY, BOUNTY HUNTER, ASSASSIN...AND ONCE, LONG AGO, MATT MURDOCK'S FIRST LOVE.
SHE HAS WITNESSED WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE, AND EVEN AS SHE TELLS HERSELF THAT DAREDEVIL IS NOW HER ENEMY--
--SHE KNOWS THAT SHE WILL AID HIM IN HIS SEARCH.

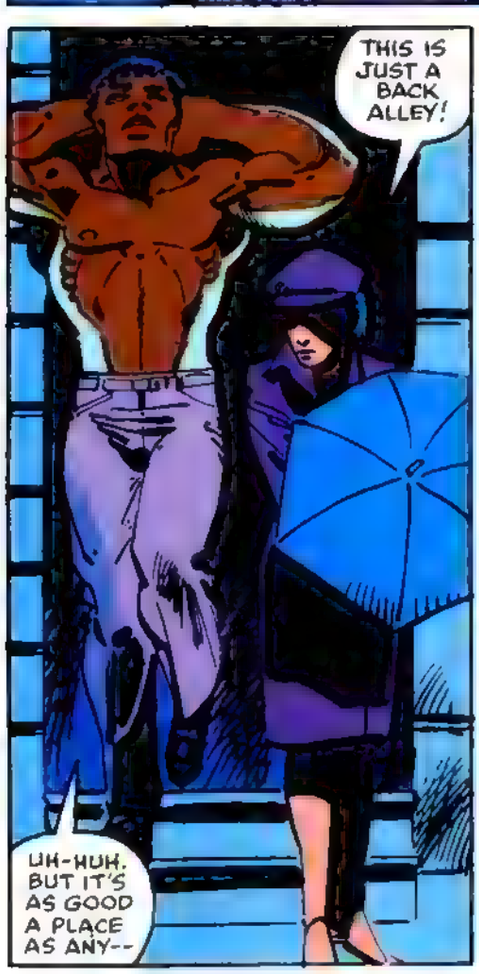

KIRIGI HAS WAITED SEVEN HOURS FOR ELEKTRA TO APPEAR AT THE QUARTERS OF THE MAN SHE DEFENDED, DAYS AGO.
HE WILL FOLLOW HER. WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY ARISES, HE WILL DO WHAT HE MUST.

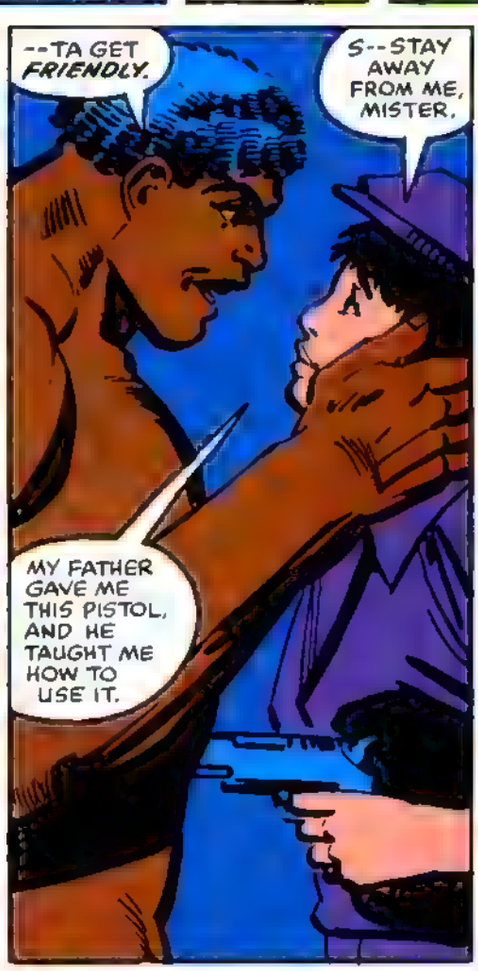

A BOWERY POOL HALL...
WILL YA LOOKIT THAT?
MEBBE SHE'S SLUMMIN'.
THAT BABE'S GOT UPTOWN WRITTEN ALL OVER HER. WHAT'S SHE DOIN' IN A JOINT LIKE THIS?
SHE FOUND THE RIGHT GUY. SNUFF OUGHTTA TEACH HER A TRICK OR TWO.


YER LOOKIN' FER STICK? NOW WHAT WOULD A CUTIE LIKE YOU WANT WITH THAT OLD ROACHBAIT?
I--I'D RATHER NOT SAY.
I'VE GOT MONEY, IF THAT'LL HELP...

COULDN'T HURT.

YES, MA'AM, I THINK I CAN HELP YOU.
RIGHT THIS WAY.
SCREWY BROAD. SHE'S HAD IT.

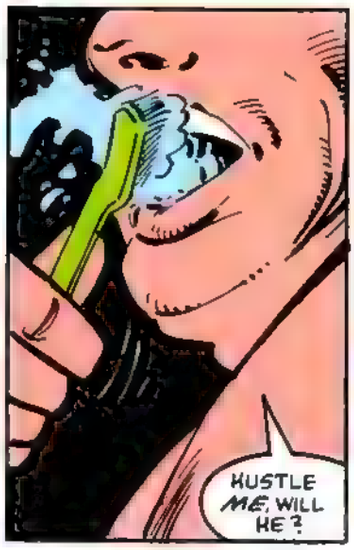

THIS IS JUST A BACK ALLEY!
UH-HUH. BUT IT'S AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY--

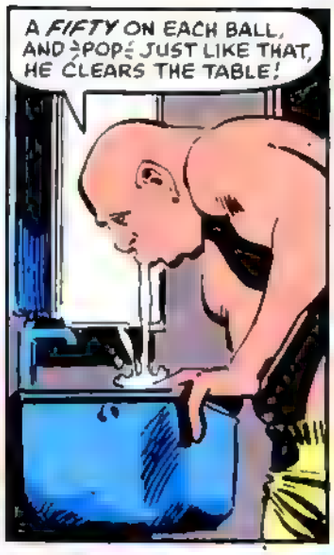

--TA GET FRIENDLY.
S--STAY AWAY FROM ME, MISTER.
MY FATHER GAVE ME THIS PISTOL, AND HE TAUGHT ME HOW TO USE IT.

NOW TAKE ME TO STICK. AND NO TRICKS.
SURE, LADY! SURE!
JUST BE CAREFUL WITH THAT THING, OKAY?

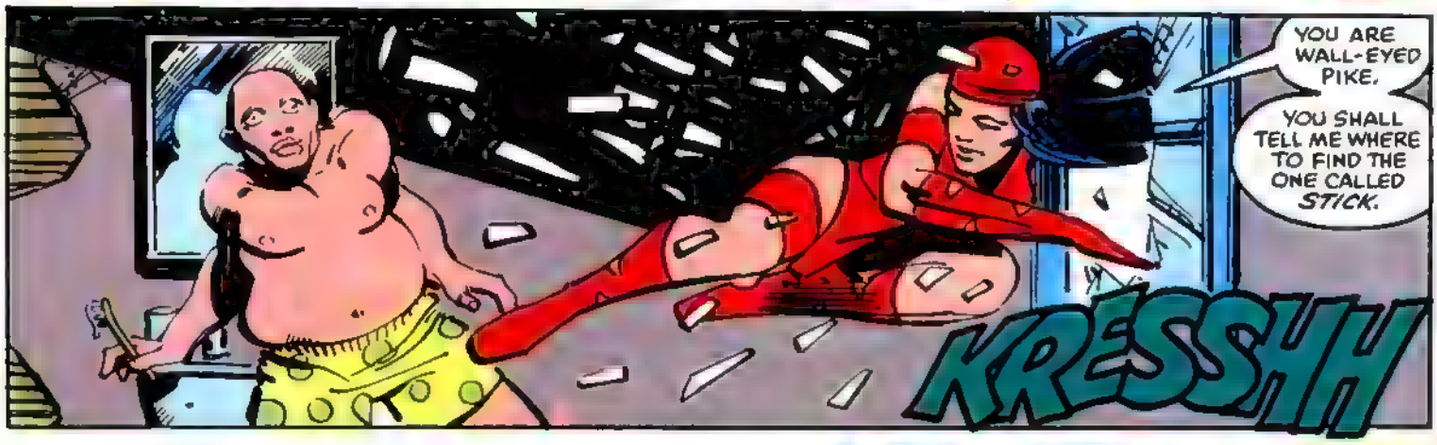
MEANWHILE...
I'M RUNNING OUT OF PATIENCE.
TALK!
ALL WE HEARD 'BOUT STICK IS WALL-EYED PIKE GETTIN' LOADED SHOOTIN' HIS MOUTH OFF DOWN AT LOUIE'S JOINT!
YEAH! PIKE WAS BELLY-ACHIN' ABOUT THAT OLD WHARF RAT HUSTLIN' HIM FER TWO BILLS!
THIS BETTER BE STRAIGHT. IF IT ISN'T--
--I'LL BE BACK.
YOU SEE THAT? HE ALMOST SLIPPED JUST THEN! DAREDEVIL ALMOST SLIPPED AND FELL!
YOU SAW IT RIGHT, SHIV. HE DON'T LOOK SO HOT.
MAYBE I CAN...
DO IT, BILGE! DO IT!
SHKK
SHKKK
NOT YET. THE OPPORTUNITY WILL PRESENT ITSELF, SOON ENOUGH...

A ROACH-INFESTED LOFT IN HELL'S KITCHEN...
CRUMMY NO-EYED SLEAZE-BALL...


HUSTLE ME, WILL HE?


A FIFTY ON EACH BALL, AND POP! JUST LIKE THAT, HE CLEARS THE TABLE!

I OUGHTTA-- HUH?

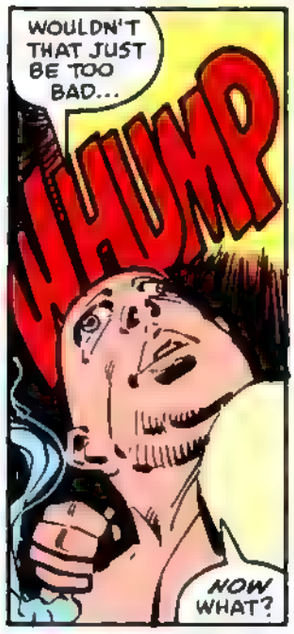

YOU ARE WALL-EYED PIKE.
YOU SHALL TELL ME WHERE TO FIND THE ONE CALLED STICK.
KRESSHH

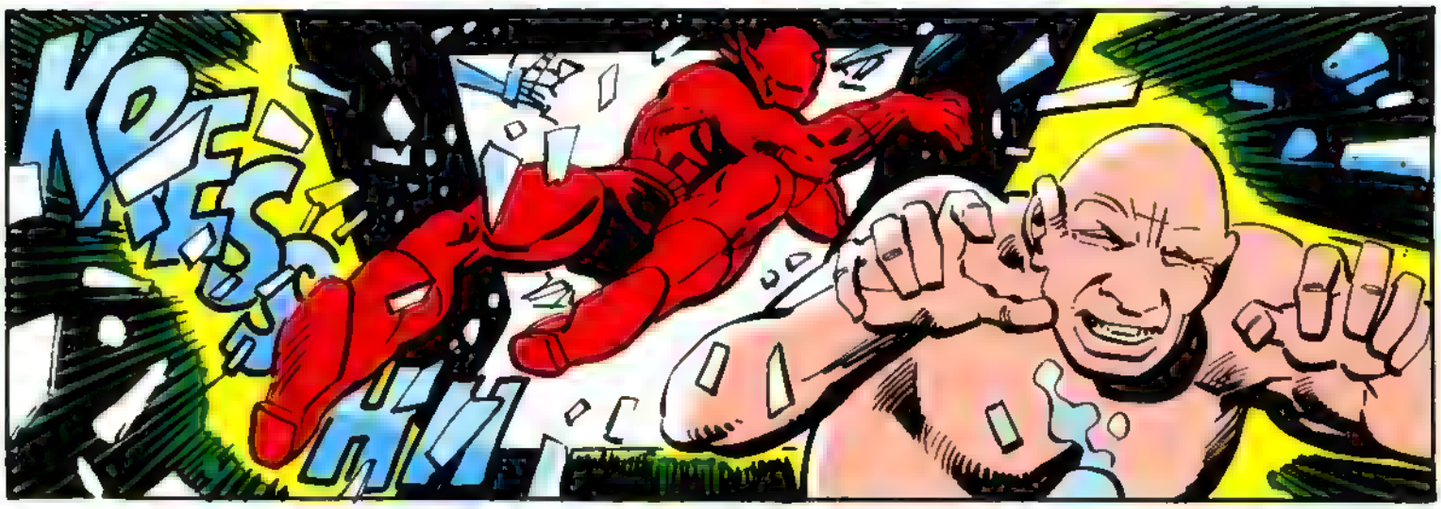
I'M TELLIN' YOU NOTH...
DUKE'S POOL HALL.
NINTH AVENUE, SOUTH OF HOUSTON.
BASEMENT.
Y'CAN'T MISS IT.

PRANCIN' LONG UNDER-WEAR TYPES. GOT NO RESPECT FER PRIVACY.

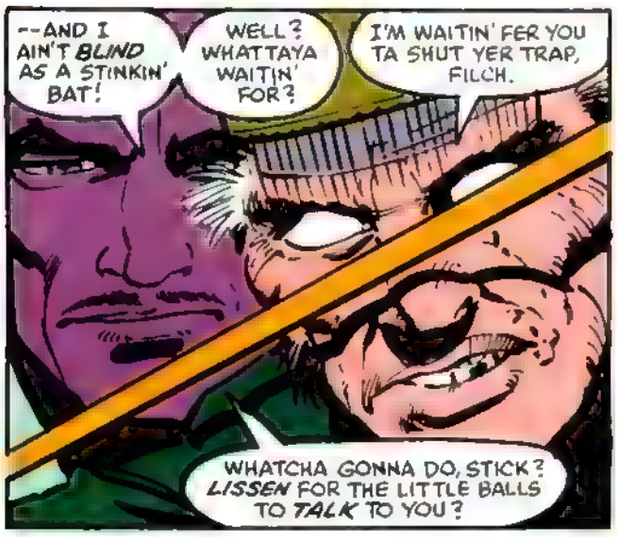
WONDER WHAT SHE WANTS WITH STICK? DIDN'T THINK NOBODY WAS INTERESTED IN THAT PIECE A' SLUDGE.

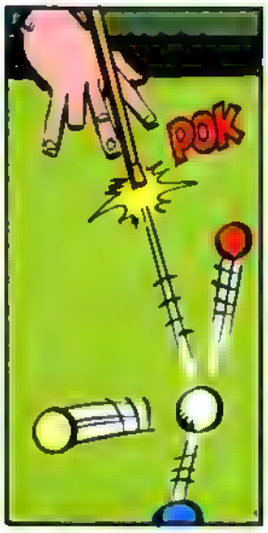
MAYBE HE CONNED HER OUTTA SOME BUCKS, TOO.
MAYBE SHE'LL KILL HIM.

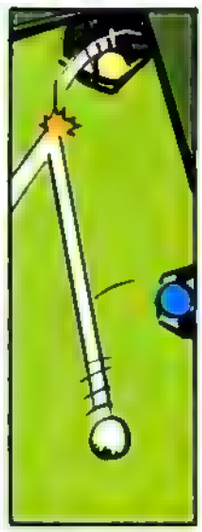

WOULDN'T THAT JUST BE TOO BAD...
WHUMP
NOW WHAT?


KE-YESS-HH

DUKE'S.
FIFTY A BALL?!
SURE! YEAH! WHY NOT? AIN'T NO WAY YOU CAN SINK ALL OF 'EM I COULDN'T DO IT--

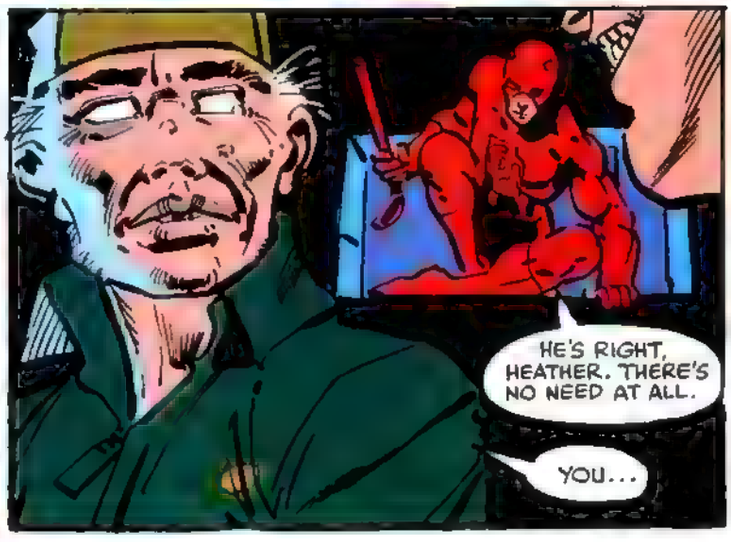

--AND I AIN'T BLIND AS A STINKIN' BAT!
WELL? WHATTAYA WAITIN' FOR?
I'M WAITIN' FER YOU TA SHUT YER TRAP, FILCH.
WHATCHA GONNA DO, STICK? LISSEN FOR THE LITTLE BALLS TO TALK TO YOU?


POK

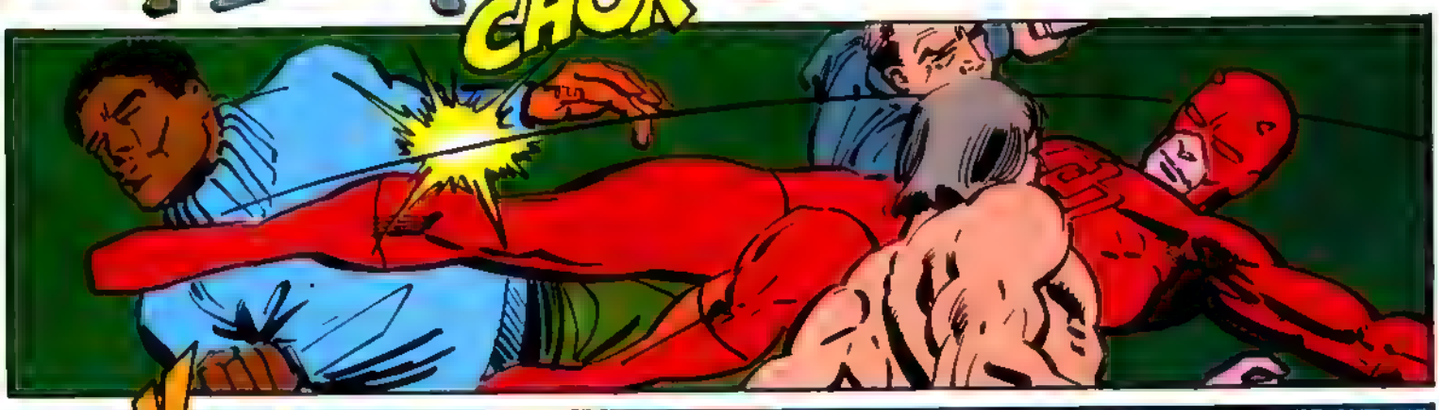


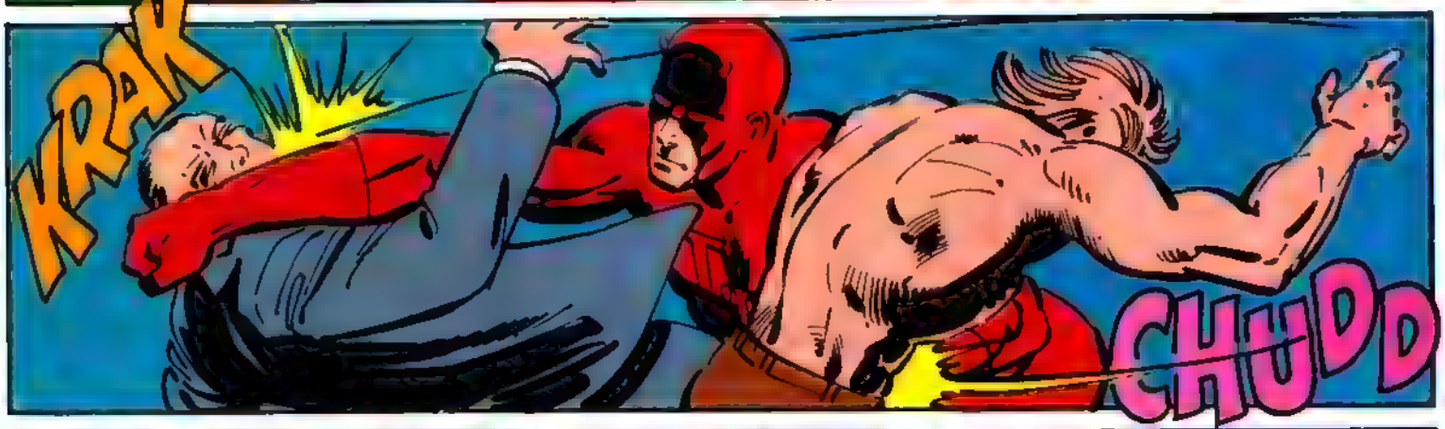
MIGHTY FINE SHOOTIN'-- FER A BLIND GUY.
YEAH. MIGHTY FINE.
MAYBE TOO FINE. MAYBE HE AIN'T SO BLIND.
WON'T MAKE NO DIFFERENCE, ONCE HE'S DEAD.
DON'T MOVE-- ANY OF YOU.

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR THIS MAN ALL NIGHT. I-- I WON'T LET YOU HURT HIM.
LADY, PUT THE HEATER AWAY. THERE AIN'T NO NEED...


HE'S RIGHT, HEATHER. THERE'S NO NEED AT ALL.
YOU...

BLAMM

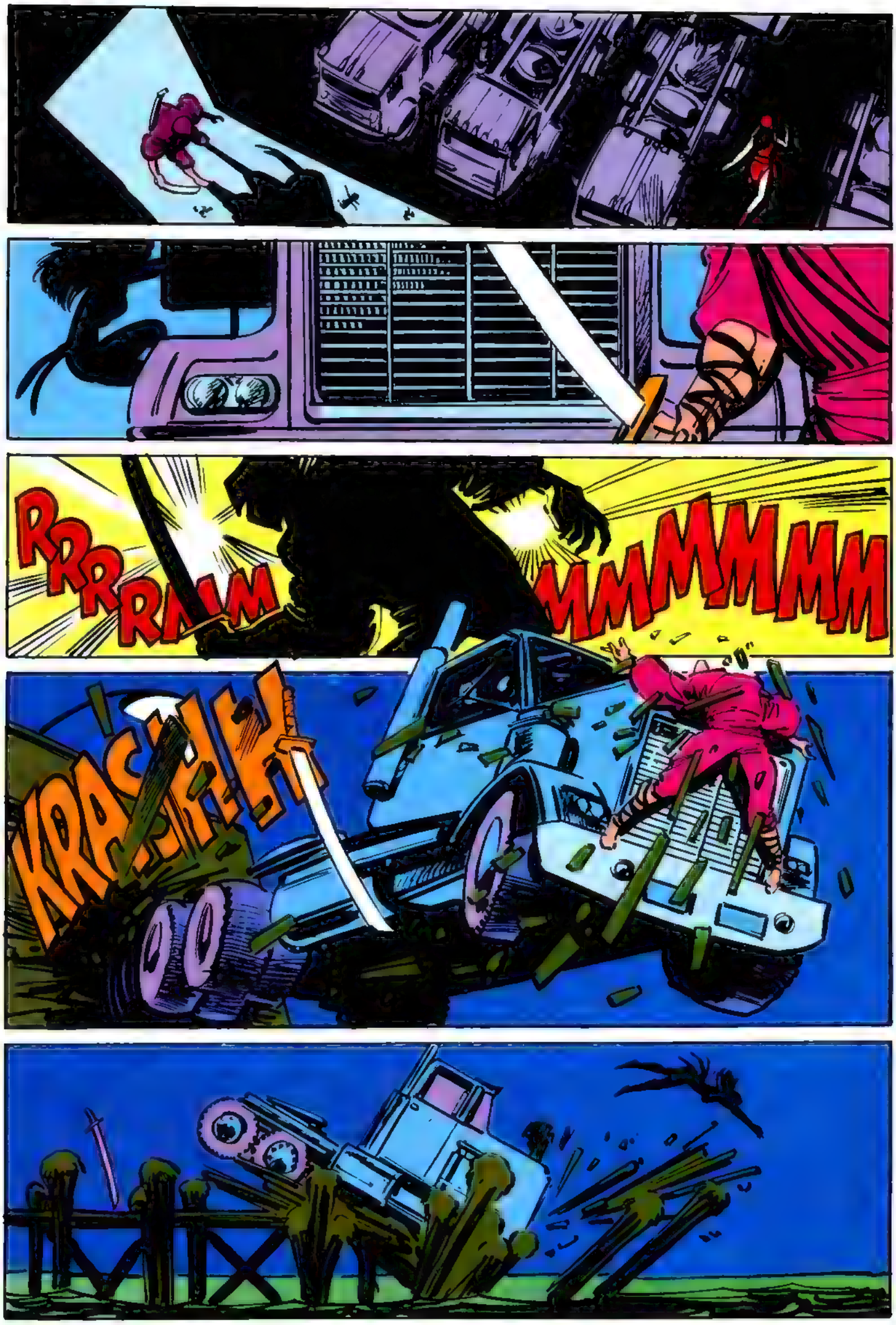

CHOK


KRAK
CHUDD

MASTER... TEACHER.. I--I'VE FOUND YOU!
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...
I COULD'VE COOLED OFF THOSE GOONS.
YER JUST AS STUPID AS YOU EVER WERE.

FINALLY, SHE HAS COME TO REST. THE ALLEY IS A PERFECT SETTING.
THE TIME TO STRIKE HAS COME.
KIRIGI...

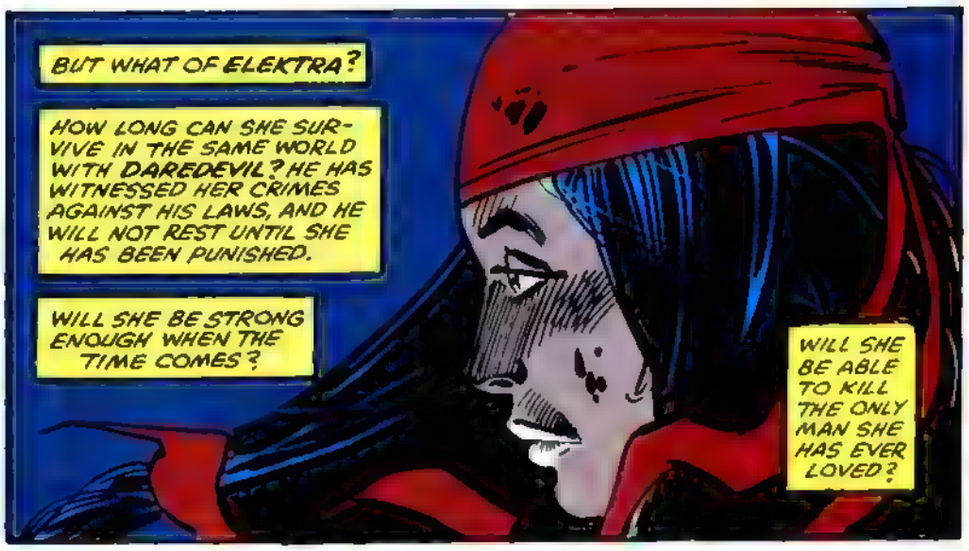
KUNNGG
THUNK
KLORD
SHHKK


RRRRAAM
MMMMMMM
KRACKKK

WARROOM

SHCHAKK-K

GOD OR DEMON, KIRIGI HAD A NECK THAT WAS HUMAN ENOUGH.


BUT WHAT OF ELEKTRA?
HOW LONG CAN SHE SURVIVE IN THE SAME WORLD WITH DAREDEVIL? HE HAS WITNESSED HER CRIMES AGAINST HIS LAWS, AND HE WILL NOT REST UNTIL SHE HAS BEEN PUNISHED.
WILL SHE BE STRONG ENOUGH WHEN THE TIME COMES?
WILL SHE BE ABLE TO KILL THE ONLY MAN SHE HAS EVER LOVED?

SHE SHUDDERS, TOUCHED BY SOMETHING COLDER THAN THE WIND.

NEXT ISSUE:

ON SALE NEXT WEEK:
THE CONCLUSION OF THE
ELEKTRA SAGA

HE'S AN UGLY HERO IN AN UGLY WORLD...
THAT'S WHY HE WEARS A MASK.
Monthly Mercenary Mayhem by
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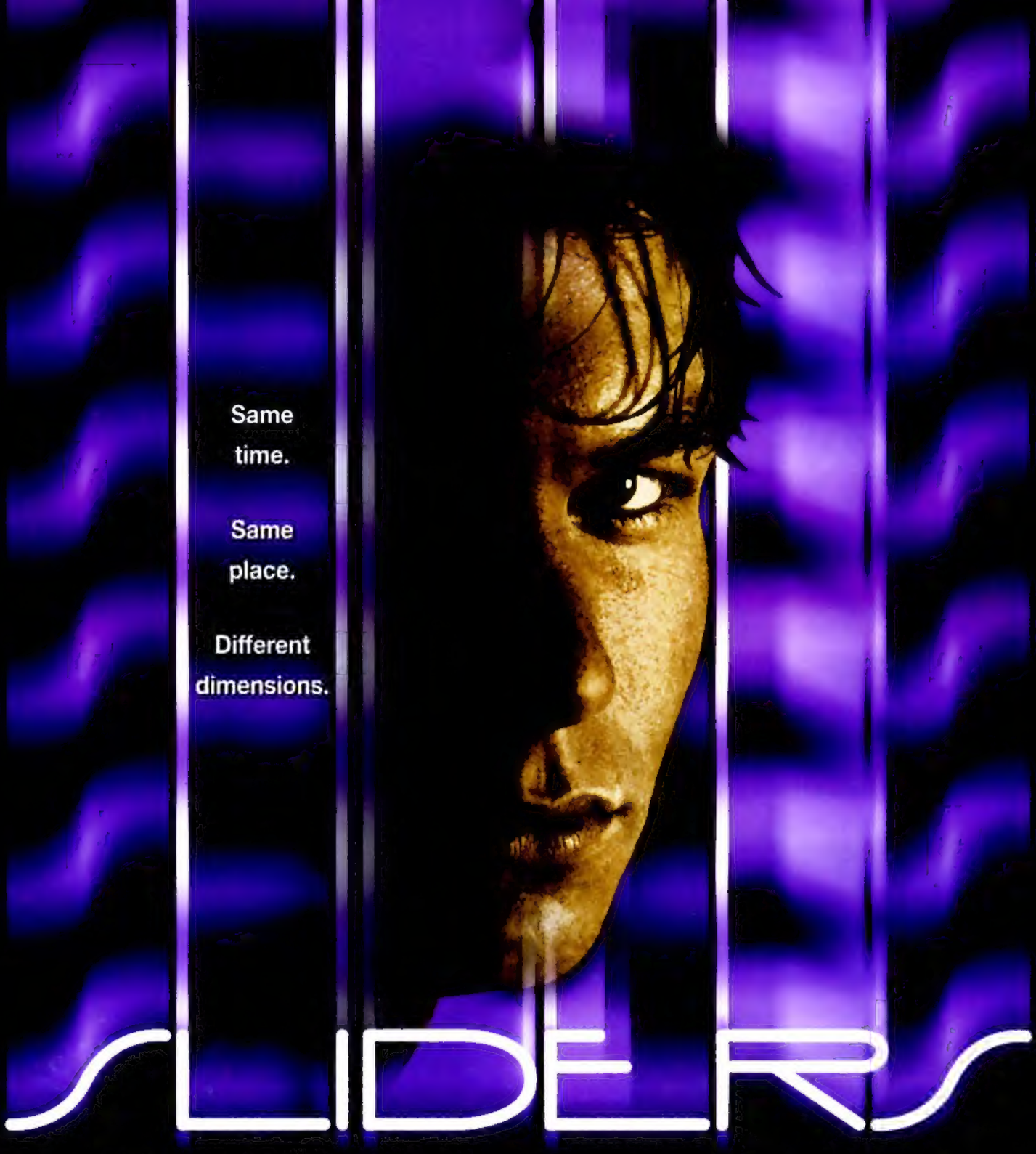

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